SPORTS / A21

Dual champion
Marquez 'next for Pacquiao'

BUSINESS / B1

OFW remittances
up 25% to $1.1B in February

NEWS / A2

GMA says Mike A
much better, out of hospital by weekend

WORLD / A19

Wolfowitz
refuses to resign over pay scandal

Still another leftist shot dead in Sorsogon

By Bobby Q. Lakulan
Inquirer Southern Luzon

SORSOGON CITY—A LINE SUMMARIZING with a .45-cal. pistol-shot constitutes a mention of the slithering Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (KMP) on its ever-widening path to outside his home here yesterday, police said.

With Jesus, 53, was the KMP's provincial

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Pope speaks of 'darkness' threat on his 80th birthday

VATICAN CITY—ON THE EVE OF HIS 80TH day, Pope Benedict XVI gave thanks for his 82 years of life dedicated to the Church with a surreal Sunday tribute in which he spoke of "dark mist" threatening the world in the form of envy, oppression and hate.

It was a birthday celebration forged with nostalgia which drew a huge crowd to St. Peter's Square, including thousands of pilgrims from

15M Pinoys live on $1/day

Pacquiao back today; hero's welcome set

By Alison W. Lopez
and Tarra R. Quismundo

ONCE AGAIN, THE NATION WILL BE AT his feet.

On the eve of Manny Pacquiao's expected arrival in Manila at 9 a.m. today, airport authorities were already preparing the Ceremonial Terminal's Presidential Lounge for him—a VIP room normally used only by foreign heads of state, incumbent and former Philippine presidents and other high dignitaries.

This will come a memorable day though Manila's air corridors to a welcome fit only for conquering heroes.

The Filipino hero on Sunday blasted into history by knocking Mexican Jorge Solis to submission with his fists in eight rounds at the Alamodome in Texas.

Pacquiao is expected to be greeted by Manila Mayor Lito Atienza upon his arrival. He will proceed to the Manila City

PACQUIAO A4

'Command vote' rising, says SWS

FOUR OF EVERY FIVE ADULT Filipinos (80 percent) say that most people in their barangay decide how to vote on their own, a survey on electoral reforms in February by the Social Weather Stations found.

However, the number of Filipinos saying that "most people (in their barangay) are told how by the leaders to decide on vote for" is growing—19 percent two months ago from 16 percent in 2004, 15 percent in 2001 and 13 percent in 1998.

In a statement, the SWS said the increased numbers of "command voting" between 1998 and 2007 happened across all areas, except in Metro Manila.

COMMAND A6

OFFICIAL Hindu Board Chair Edo Macizo (right) watches as Labrador Retriever Lucky sniffs suitcases of pirated discs seized during a raid on a mall in Pasay City on Monday. The canine members of Duterte's anti-hijack unit help Manila in its fight against pirated DVDs. Lucky and Flo helped uncover some 45 discs and burned-out movies worth $1.1 million in Malaysia. AP

Sniffer dogs Lucky and Flo debut in Makati raid on pirated DVDs

TWO CANINE MEMBERS OF SWAT and Watch force arrived in Metro Manila where they sniffed through locked steel doors, pointing police officers to stashes of pirated movies during a series of raids on malls on Monday.

Flo and Lucky, a successful one-month stint in Malaysia where they angered movie pirates by helping authorities uncover 1.5 million discs and business worth about US$1.3 million (about 57 million), Lucky and Flo are now training their noses on the Philippines.

Surveillance staff owners scattered sweet or baked devices to lure Lucky and Flo, known respectively when the two Labradors trained in Ireland, England and the United States to detect optical discs, but government agents and representatives

MAYHEM INSIDE A15

World Bank: 19% of RP population in 2000 very poor

By Doris C. Dumlao

WASHINGTON—AT LEAST 14.8 million Filipinos try to survive on less than $1 a day, accounting for 1.5 percent of the people in the world currently trapped in extreme poverty, according to latest World Bank estimates.

But some 43 million in the Philippines, based on the country's population in 2000, live on $2 a day. The low-income to-normal-consumer of poverty.

Data from the Philippine household expenditures (PHE) 2007 showed that global poverty rates continued to fall in the first four years of the 21st century, with the proportion of people living on less than $1 a day falling below the 1 billion mark.

Two dollar-a-day poverty rates were falling too, but an estimated 2.6 billion people, almost half the population of the developing world, were still living below that level in 2004.

The PHE indicators 2007, a publication, was launched here on October on the sidelines of the joint International Monetary Fund-World Bank spring meetings.

People living on less than $1 a day fell to 18.4 percent as a share of the total population in 2004, leaving an estimated 985 million people living in extreme poverty.

By comparison, the total number of the world's extremely poor was 1.25 billion in 1990.

Between 1990 and 2004, dollar a-day poverty fell by more than 260 million, according to the World Bank.

Filipinos living on the $1 a-day international poverty line accounted for 10 percent of the Philippine population of

5 suspected car thieves clad in police jackets killed in QC

By Jeannette I. Andrade
and Nikko Dizon

FIVE MEN ALL CLAD IN POLICE jackets were killed in what police said was a gun battle with a gang of car thieves in Quezon City in front TAJAL (censored).

Despite the apparently fierce shootout, the gang's members suffered no firearm wounded neither a bruise or a scratch, based on primary taken by the Inquirer and by police agents.

Police said the shootout followed a chase from Elliptical Road to Bellini Avenue in Barangay Pasong Putik, which ended in a pistol and improvised explosive device battle.

The five slain men, all wearing black police jackets and camouflage shirts marked "PNP" died from bullet wounds, mostly in the head and chest.

Their bodies were strewn along Bellini, two of them lying near their vehicle with Plates No. VEG 463.

Agents Fernan Perez said that based on an account of an eyewitness, the dead men "appeared to have been shot at close range."

A police statement identified one of the slain men as Michelito Valderama Tristan, 44, of Barrame, Balanga, based on a driver's license recovered from his body.

One of the men bore a "Batchoy" tattoo on the left side of the chest and a "Commando" tattoo

VIOLENCE B1 & C1

FIGURE in the five suspected carjackers lie dead near the pavement on Bellini Avenue, Barangay Pasong Putik, Fairview, Quezon City, after a gun battle with police agents early Monday morning.

LAST DAY. Taxpayers line up at the Bureau of Internal Revenue office in Manila on the eve of their taxes. Yesterday was the deadline for the filing of income tax returns.

OIC urges gov't, MNLF to stop fighting

By Cynthia Balana
and Clemaine Jeremaka in Manila
and Julie S. Alipala in Zamboanga City

THE INFLUENTIAL ORGANIZATION OF THE Islamic Conference has made an urgent appeal to the Philippine government and the Moro National Liberation Front to end four days of fighting or risk talks that has cost thousands of villagers fleeing their homes.

The appeal for the "cessation of all military operations" was issued yesterday by Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu, secretary general of the 57-nation OIC based in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.

He also urged the two parties to abide by the 1996 peace accord "in letter and spirit and to resume negotiations in good faith" for its full implementation.

But Foreign Undersecretary Rafael Seguis and the Armed forces of the Philippines spokesperson said the Philippine military operation on Jolo was not about a violation of the peace accord but the exercise of a duty to arrest terrorists allied with Jemaah Islamiyah (JI).

Seguis and Lt. Col. Bartolome Bacarro also rejected the Ihsanoglu proposal to establish a monitoring team to observe the suspension of hostilities and called Philippine military activities there as "a law enforcement operation and not geared only the Armed's identified terrorists."

The OIC has brokered peace talks between the government and the MNLF, which is negotiating on the sole representative of the Moro people, besides major rebel group, the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, operates in Mindanao.

Intermittent fighting has broken out since the eighth round of peace talks started between the MNLF and the Philippine military.

The worst outbreak of violence occurred in February 2000 in the Jolo town of Buanmasdo which at least 37 soldiers were killed, including dictator Lt. Col. Dennis Villanueva, in an ambush by 400 renegade MNLF commander Nur Misuari.

On Friday, Misuari's force shelled a Marine

OIC URGES A6

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Northern and Eastern Luzon will experience mostly cloudy skies with isolated thunderstorms, while showers and thunderstorms in many cloudy areas with scattered thunderstorms in Mindanao.

Second
FRONTPAGE

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Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Partly Cloudy
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Dagupan	Cloudy with Rain	Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy
Laoag	Cloudy with Rain	Jolo	Cloudy with Rain
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rain	Gen. Santos	Cloud
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rain	Cotabato	Partly Cloudy
Catbalogan	Cloudy with Rain	Tagaytay/Nasugbu	Cloudy with Rain
Iloilo	Cloudy with Rain	Puerto P. Br.	Cloudy with Rain
Cebu	Cloudy with Rain	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rain

Low turnout of absentee voters; GMA cites law

By Juliet Labog-Javellana and Dil Cabacungan Jr.

THE LOW TURNOUT OF OVERseas absentee voters could be due to the stringent requirements of the law, President Macapagal-Arroyo said yesterday.

Absentee voting started on last Sunday. There are 504,000 registered absentee voters this year, but only 726 cast their vote as of Saturday afternoon, according to the Commission on Elections.

"There was a low turnout (last time) because there are conditions in the law which concerns Filipino workers, particularly those in the United States, have difficulty complying with," Ms Arroyo said in an interview after her electoral symbolic discussion at the Heroes Hall (Malacañang).

This is the second time since the 2004 presidential elections that Filipinos working abroad cast vote in the national elections as absentee voters. The law provides that absentee voters can cast their vote 30 days before the election. Students have 60 days to vote.

Ms Arroyo said COMELEC had a hard to comply with the provision requiring them to return to the country.

"The important thing is they have the right to vote and it is really up to them to exercise it," she said.

Under Republic Act No. 9189 or the Absentee Voting Act, Filipinos who have become immigrants or permanent residents of a foreign country are disqualified from casting votes in a Philippine election unless they execute an affidavit stating their intention to resume actual physical permanent residency in the country within three years after their application for absentee voting has been approved.

A separate southern group also endorsed the low turnout of absentee voters to the "Hello Garci" electoral fraud scandal in 2004.

The Center for Migrants Advocacy executive director Tess Bacon said the lack of interest and enthusiasm among OFWs was due to the allegations that Mr Arroyo rigged the 2004 polls to secure her election.

On the other hand, Sen. Richard Gordon blamed the Comelec for the paltry number of overseas Filipino voters who registered for the May 2007 election.

Gordon said that despite a hefty budget and ample lead time, the Comelec added only 7 02,000 registered voters to the 300,000 that signed up during the random absentee voting in 2004.

The poll body was granted a P200-million budget and 11 months to conduct its registration.

"What happened? Thousands have disenfranchise for failing to launch an aggressive information drive to generate more interest among the millions of OFWs," Gordon said.

GMA says Mike A now much better

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

FOR THE FIRST TIME since First Gentleman Jose Miguel "Mike" Arroyo's delicate open-heart surgery last week, President Macapagal-Arroyo was able to have a long conversation with her husband.

"He is much better now," Ms Arroyo told reporters yesterday at the end of her roundtable forum at the Heroes Hall in Malacañang.

"When I spoke here, we were able to converse, for the first time, we had a bit extended conversation. We talked for about 15 minutes, because he was no longer too sedated," she said.

Mike's sisters, the First Gentleman could now "tease" him, she said. "They [doctors] are hoping it will all be well."

When the President left the hospital to resume her televised roundtable discussions with officials and ordinary people in Malacañang, she appointed his sister and confidante to stay.

This was a different Ms Arroyo, who just last week, was subdued and unsmiling.

Yesterday, she was laughing and even granted an unusually interview with the press, a practice she had shunned since before her husband's emergency hospitalization for a disarming interview.

Looking spiritually renewed, the President kept saying "Praise God" and "Thank God" during the 20-minute roundtable discussion on the International Monetary Fund's quarterly forecast for the country's economy.

She even thanked Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Romulo Neri, saying that he should not be afraid of the coming blessing of the press.

She laughed after giving an emphatic no to the proposal of former President Bienvenido Tobias, a contestant on the Genuine Opposition slate, that she should take a leave of absence and take care of her husband.

The President said her 66-year-old husband was "much better" yesterday, two days after he was taken off the respirator and after his kidneys started functioning again last Saturday.

The First Gentleman had kidney failure after his 10-hour surgery and had been subjected to continuous dialysis.

The President was the one who broke the good news to her husband that Manny Pacquiao had defeated Mexican's pride and undefeated Jorge Solis in a decision in the 8th round during Sunday's WBC International Super Featherweight Championship fight at the Alamodome in San Antonio, Texas.

The First Gentleman, who in better days had showed an appetite for Pacquiao in more of his fights in the United States, was fully conscious Sunday but was barred by his doctors from viewing the televised bout.

The President said she talked to Pacquiao on Sunday night to congratulate him for his victory and to tell him that his "fighting flesh symbolized the drive of Filipinos to excel" in all fields.

She said her husband was "a bit groggy" but managed to compliment Pacquiao's latest achievement in the world boxing arena, which made Filipinos proud once again.

Ms Arroyo said that after breaking her week in the Palace, she would go back to St. Luke's Medical Center to watch over her husband. With reports from Michael Lim Ubac

SENATORIAL candidate Michael Defensor poses for a souvenir picture with a Filipino migrant worker in Central Hong Kong

Defensor, Zubiri say they're not campaigning in HK

By Blanche S. Rivera
Correspondent

HONG KONG—THEY DISTINGUISH THE crowd at an organization's lunch, shouted the "kumustahan" of Filipino domestic workers, shook hundreds of hands, gave out Team Unity hats and gamely posed for pictures.

But no, they insist they were not campaigning here.

Reelection election rules that prohibit campaigning after the opening of the campaign shorter today, JOSEL Team Unity senatorial candidates Michael Defensor and Miguel Zubiri flew into Hong Kong Sunday, the usual day off of some 120,000 Filipino domestic hers, to make their presence felt among overseas voting public.

Defensor and Zubiri spoke at the launch of the newly formed Philippine Alliance Sunday afternoon, detailing their achievements in Congress and asking for "help" for the entire Team Unity senatorial slate in this year's reelection.

"Team yesterday has sung serbisyo ko sa mga 3 am sa aberyahan sa Sicsican. Hindi ako amak-ilog-ada ng senado... Eskang ang hose ng Bfardman sa Senado," Zubiri, a Bukidnon congressman, told the crowd in their local language.

Defensor, known personal and chief of staff, told the audience that he called President Macapagal-Arroyo just before he went on stage to get her to relax the controversial new deployment policy of the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration for domestic helpers.

"Sabagan ninyo ang sarong grupo, Team Unity, para kahuyan kamo ng sarong tawo, lalo na ng agrikultura sa Mindanao," he said.

The administration candidates came a week after opposition senatorial candidates Alan Peter Cayetano, Manny Villar and Estelito Lacson shortened visits here and were in the mood electorate held by the time they left on a Saturday.

"I'm not affected by that. They [opposition] were given the time to campaign. Of course, presence is one, it will help you push your group," Defensor said.

"Kami naglapot-palema alalol sang late pag-pasyal namin. Ano, dalo? Sometimes also the usual aged kasi ang kalibtas ko we still have time to push the Team Unity genre that it is not yet over until the May 14 elections," he said.

With 96,000 registered voters, Hong Kong has the second biggest population of overseas voters after Saudi Arabia, with 148,000 voters.

Vice Consul Maria Alma Ayuga, who heads the OFW secretariat here, said that according to the Commission on Elections, the end of the overseas campaign was on April 15.

"Kung may campaigning after that period is prohibited," she said in a text message.

Team Unity deputy spokesperson Antonio Alfonso, however, maintained that the candidates were "technically" not campaigning.

"We were invited by an organization, since we're all here (Defensor, magkakasama) we supposed and people naturally come to us, so you introduce yourself and say 'Hi! I'm a candidate'," Alfonso said.

Defensor and Zubiri went to Hong Kong, Team Unity and United Hong Kong, gaining through the Filipino overseas workers' support. Saturday Sunday and World Wide Web, where community cohorts, Philippine banks and Filipino stores are located.

Antoni Jose Montano and Nicanor "Jun" Soriano, both also gunning for the Senate under Team Unity, are scheduled to fly here next Sunday to make the rounds as well, Alfonso said.

"We wanted to campaign but we found out on may kasing gray area, kaya if you noticed very careful kami," Defensor said.

"I think technically we are still allowed to campaign. I think the elections here cannot guarantee the result until after the elections in the Philippines. Iyan campaign pero di pa iyan ideclare," he said.

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SC case looms over party-list names

By Nikko Dizon

FORMER HOUSE PRESIDENT JOSEPH JAmora has added his voice to the growing number of people urging the Commission on Elections to withhold the names of nominees of the party list groups participating in the May 14 local-level elections.

"We want a definitive decision from the Comelec on whether they will give the names of the party nominees of the party-list groups," he said yesterday in a text message to the Comelec main office in Manila yesterday.

Jalosjos said if the poll body failed to do so, he would be "constrained to file an appropriate case at the Supreme Court against the Comelec."

His expressed concern particularly over a news paper item (not in the Inquirer) that appeared on Friday, quoting Comelec chair Benjamin Abalos Jr., as saying the poll body will not release the names of the party list nominees.

Several party-list organizations have called on the Comelec to publish the names of the party list nominees but the election commissioners, including Abalos, have said that there was no provision in the Party-list Law, Supreme Court ruling that nominees should be identified.

In Baliuag City Commissioner Resurreccion Borra said in an earlier interview that releasing the names of the party-list nominees could defeat the purpose of the party-list system.

Borra said the idea of the party-list is for democracy to work according to their choice of marginalized sector that has to be represented in Congress, and should not be influenced by who will be that representative if the groups are elected.

Borra said that the Comelec will release the names of the party list nominees only after the May 14 elections. With a report from Evelyn Rangaa, Inquirer Visayas

New meteor shower seen this week

ANOTHER METEOR SHOWER IS COMING next week, and you can start watching it this week.

The astronomy are standing to flank from the Lyra constellation on Monday until week in one of this year's larger meteor showers, the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) said yesterday.

Glorious candidates "should watch out for the meteor shower and make their wish," Nathaniel Cruz, Pagasa weather branch chief, said in an interview.

Sky watchers can begin watching the Lyrids meteor shower (after Lyra) on Thursday night, said Ester Ann Cruz, weather specialist II based at Pagasa's Astronomical Observatory in the University of the Philippines in Diliman, Quezon City.

The shower—visible to the naked eye—will peak on Saturday. The best time to view will be from midnight onward, he said.

Unlike other meteor showers, this one is low-spectacular. Only eight meteorites are streaking across the sky per hour, he said. In 12 to cold.

The nine major meteor showers are the Quarantids on Jan. 3 at 59 meteors per hour; Lyrids, Eta Aquarids on May 4, 50 per hour; Delta Aquarids on July 30, 35 per hour; Arietids, Orionids on Oct. 21, 75 per hour; Taurids, Nov. 4, eight per hour; Leonids, Nov. 16, six per hour; Geminids, Dec. 13, 60 per hour; and Ursids, Dec. 22, 12 per hour. (TJ) Reuters

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POPE BENEDICT XVI arrives to celebrate Mass in St. Peter's Square at the Vatican Sunday. AP

Pope speaks of 'darkness' threat on his 80th …

From page A1

On Pope's native Bavaria

The Vatican had invited the faithful to two outdoor Masses on the steps of St. Peter's Basilica to help Benedict celebrate both his 80th birthday and the anniversary of his April 19, 2005, election to the pontificate.

During Mass, Benedict said only the power of God could defeat evil in the world.

"Let us ask that the gift of God be accorded above all to the nations where oppression, hate and the tragedy of war hold sway," he said.

Benedict paid tribute to his predecessor, saying John Paul II had lived through dictatorships, poverty and violence and had "profound experience of the darkness which also threatens the world of our time."

Joseph Ratzinger, who would take the name of Benedict as Pontiff, was born April 16, 1927, in Marktl am Inn, a riverside town in the Bavaria region of Germany.

Germans echoed in the uneven silvery loud ring to the Mass on Sunday as large groups of pilgrims streamed to the square to join cardinals, bishops and foreign dignitaries.

Most sincere thanks

Some of the pilgrims were Benedict's fellow countrymen and women in traditional dress, including feather-trimmed hats and mini in shorts; others waved German flags during the Mass.

Benedict told the crowd they were joining him in a reflection of his "last brief" life.

Acknowledging their participation, the Pope said he was overcome by "my most sincere thanks, from the depths of my heart, to the entire Church, which, like a river literally experienced these days, surrounds me with its affection."

Benedict's reserved, almost shy style, came through in his homily, in contrast to John Paul II who would often speak informally of his youth in Poland. Benedict sounded almost apologetic that he was striking a personal note, however brief, in a religious service.

"The liturgy should not serve to talk about one's tips of one's self," Benedict said.

He thanked his lay sister, Maria, another brother, Georg, and his family, for being steadfastly close to him.

"I give thanks in a special way because, from the first day, I was able to enter and grow in the great community of believers" in God, Benedict said.

He noted that he was born at Easter time, precisely the vigil of the day when Christians celebrate in joy their belief in Christ's resurrection.

Benedict appears to enjoy his peace well. He walks briskly, thanks through long public ceremonies, and has thus found motivation as Pontiff gave no subs Monday in Bundestag.

Right after Benedict's election in the papacy, his older brother, Georg Ratzinger, expressed worry about the toll that the burdens of the papacy might take on his brother's health.

Stamina

But Benedict's stamina seems to be surviving his vigorous, packed schedule.

On Wednesday, he will receive 500 Inventory General Ban Ki-Moon at the Vatican, and on next weekend he will make an overnight pilgrimage to northern Italy. On the 29 May, he will travel to Brazil, where the traditionally strong Catholic Church is being under fulfilled to Protestant evangelical churches.

While there are no indications that Benedict suffers from any serious or chronic medical problems, there have been ailments in the past—including a 2005 hemorrhagic stroke.

Among the Pope's birthday presents was a keeped holder decorated with gold and precious stones, from Church Protector Cardinal Friedrich Meisner, and a more practical gift—80 bottles of specially brewed Bavarian dark beer and an equal number of wines, carried in the luggage of another bishop from the diocese of a friend Duke with German origins.

The Pope smiled as he gazed across the sea of faithful gathered under brilliant sunshine on his square.

Yellow and white are the official Vatican colors, and yellow posies were lined up in perfect order across the handkerchiefs in the Mass. Clusters of yellow daffodils brightened the gray cobblestone elsewhere in the square.

Doctrinal correctness

The future Pope spent most of his earlier years studying and teaching theology in Germany and later trying to ensure that Catholics kept to doctrinal correctness in two decades as a top aide to Pope John Paul II.

Referring to his election to the papacy, Benedict said: "With the growing weight of responsibility, the Lord brought me more help every day."

In his first two years, he has waged a vigorous Church campaign against same-sex marriage, abortion and euthanasia.

Benedict has cranked down on Church rhetoric whose writings were found not to seriously reflect the late preaching. He has also called for the use of more Latin in the Church, including some prayers by the faithful. AP

THE FAITHFUL stand in front of the stone font early Monday morning where Pope Benedict XVI was baptized 80 years ago in the Bavarian town of Marktl in southern Germany. AP

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Still another leftist shot dead in Sorsogon

From page A1

bigot's unidentified killings, according to a list compiled by human rights and leftist groups data Karapatan Monitor. Karapatan listed 29 deaths in 2005. (The Bayanan count is 299 and does not include deaths in clashes).

Sept. Fortunato Argarin, Sorsogon City police chief, said a witness reported that the killer had arrived on a motorcycle at a restaurant in front of the provincial Bureau of Corrections in San Juan and had used a gun.

When Arias emerged at 7:10 a.m. to see his guests, the assailant approached him and opened fire. Arias ran away toward the back of his house, chased by the gunman who fired four more shots as he fled and finally until the victim fell about 50 meters away beside a truck, Argarin said.

Argarin said nine empty bullet shells were found at the scene of the attack just inside the City Hall. Motive for the slaying of Arias, the 62nd KMP member to be killed, was not immediately known.

Wake for victim

Argarin said the motorcycle rider who owns the motorcycle carnapped and who police suspected that she had been identified (to arrest by two witnesses) confessed that the attacker escaped on foot to place at Agnes to 45 a.m. on a JT Yamaha motorcycle and undetected pursuit.

The gunman was apparently waiting for the victim to come out of his house as he was preparing there, this witness said police. When Arias emerged, the gunman stood up and attacked him.

Argarin said the motorcycle with Plate No. DM 1033 had been loaned to its registered owner by Constantino Bonto. Police are investigating how it got to Sorsogon City.

He said that the stolen plate number earlier mentioned and the police blamed after a motorcycle another complained last week that the driver of the motorcycle whipped him with a pistol along the city's downtown road.

Police are trying to determine if the suspect in that incident was the same man who shot Arias.

But Argarin said that the motorcycles involved in the two separate incidents were not the same.

Wife saw killer

Arias' wife Edelyn said she saw the killer but was unable to do anything. She said her husband had no known enemy and had not been threatened, adding he recently being threatened by militant organizations.

Edelyn said Arias had been summoned by an Army officer whose unit established a detachment in their barangay some time late last year. She said Arias was interrogated for his involvement in the "progressive movement."

Since then, her husband had cleared down on his involvement in activities of militant organizations, Edelyn added.

She called on the authorities to give justice to her husband.

KMP spokesperson Karl Ats condemned the killing, saying it was a deserters action of the government.

Corrections

IN THE APRIL 14 ISSUE, a letter to the editor on Pope A14 of the Opinion section—"If the Senator are doing it, it must be right"—mistaken the constitutionality of Sen. Edgardo Angara to the governor of nuevas province Aurora Gov. Bellaflor Angara. Cuerdo is the name—not the wife—of Senator Angara.

* * *

IN THE APRIL 16 ISSUE, a Lifestyle article on Page F4—"Sotto's connected works"—misspelled the name of a Filipino artist. The painter's name is Pablo Baron…not Baron…Asenso.

* * *

Readers may send their suggestions or complaints to the Inquirer to the Editor, Philippine Daily Inquirer, 5th Building, Chino Roces Avenue corner Mercedes Street, Makati City, fax No. 897-47-92-04, e-mail address <letters@inquirer.com.ph>

Complaints about lack of fullness or objectivity may be sent to Letitia Aldaba Stuart, readers' advocate, e-mail address <readersadvocate@inquirer.com.ph> or fax No. 897-47-95-98. Attn: Readers Advocate. Her phone number is 897-0808 Local 542.

US Peace Corps director joins search for volunteer

By Cynthia D. Balana and Alcuin Papa

US PEACE CORPS DIRECTOR RONALD A. Tschetter was scheduled to arrive in the country last night to consult with local officials regarding the ongoing search for the group's missing American volunteer, Julie Campbell.

Campbell, 48, was last seen on April 6 in Roxas, Iloilo. She reportedly intended to hike a hill near Balud, 115 kilometers east of Roxas, and was unaccompanied.

Tschetter plans to travel to the town today to meet with Americans and Filipinos embroiled or involved in the search, according to the US Embassy in Manila.

Tschetter is the 17th director of the Peace Corps and the third in its history to have served as a Peace Corps volunteer. This is his first visit to the country.

Tschetter and his wife Nancy were Peace Corps volunteers in India from 1966-68, where they served as community health workers.

Authorities in Iloilo have stepped up efforts to locate Campbell, according to the Philippine National Police in the province.

Two helicopters from the PNP and the Philippine Army had been dispatched to the distant area to look for Campbell.

Chief Supt. Raul Gonzales, police commander for the Cordillera Autonomous Region, said he had deployed 100 policemen in Bataan, including the Bataan side of the municipality in the Mount Natib Province, to search for Campbell.

"We are starting all efforts and mobilizing every available resource for the search operations," Gonzales said.

Military spokesperson Lt. Col. Bartolome Bacarro dispelled reports that Campbell might have been abducted by communist rebels.

"Until now, we still don't know what caused her disappearance—she might just be in some area. The possibility that she was abducted is not in the picture yet," Bacarro told reporters yesterday.

He also noted that the New People's Army had not been active in Iloilo for years now.

Gonzales said in much "There are no NPAs in our area. Any information as to the effect that Campbell was abducted by the NPA cannot be consistent."

Campbell is Caucasian, with blonde hair and green eyes, photos. She is 1.7 meters tall (5 feet 7 inches) and weighs 64 kg (127 lb).

Army Maj. Gen. Rodrigo Maclang said residents had told the military that Campbell arrived by tricycle at a road junction leading to the nearby Balud village on April 6. From where she planned to hike to a spot to view fireflies in nature.

She had also contacted a local musician to tour her to Village Inn in Balud, but did not show up for her appointment that day Maclang said.

Fr. Ian Campbell had a free reservation to go back to Manila on April 9 because she was to catch a flight the following day.

Campbell is one of 137 US Peace Corps volunteers currently in the Philippines. She has been teaching college students in Legazpi City since March 2005.

Anyone who has information on her movements or location may call John Borja at (032) 988-1270 or the US Embassy at (02) 528-6000. With reports from Christina O. Avendaño and AP

Military wants captured MNLF camp for keeps

By Fe Zamora

IF THEY WILL HAVE THEIR WAY, the military wants to develop Camp Lt. Col. Datoon Mikkaw-mas-ulun known as Camp Abul Khayr to the MNLF—and discover what to give it back to the "owners."

In a set of recommendations, military ground commanders and the controversial rebel expansionist line at the command of three towns, Kabuntalan (Datu Piang), Pagalungan (Datu) and Pamanan.

"It is a strategic location, that's why Malik wants it," a source officer in Western Command said.

"It is our view that it will be advantageous for the government to have the area developed as a community where unarmed members of the MNLF and civilian civilians can pursue a livelihood," the officer explained in their recommendation.

2005 fighting

"The MNLF can say but only if they are not armed," the official, speaking on condition that he wouldn't not be named because he was not authorized to talk to media, said.

Camp Abul Khayr is Brgy. Bagoinged in Datu Piang, Maguindanao, which was controlled by combined elements of the Army's 6th Infantry Division and Army Special Forces in 2005, during almost two weeks of fighting that left 37 soldiers dead, among them Lt. Col. Datoon Mikkawmas, commander of the 52nd Infantry Battalion.

Retired Lt. Gen. Alberto Braganza, then chief of the Southern Command at Mindanao, described Camp Abul Khayr as this "fort Bonifacio."

In turn, Braganza who announced that the captured MNLF camp has been named in honor of Mikkawmas, a 1986 graduate of the Philippine Military Academy.

But in mid-2005, the government turned over the camp back to Malik, once its deadly bunker. Braganza failed to file a formal order to move it after the fallen Mikkawmas. In a telephone interview yesterday, Braganza himself was unsure if the proper documentation were made.

Pagoda-style structure

Shaded by coconut trees, the 20-hectare camp consists of several semi-concrete structures, with a two-storey Pagoda-styled at the base as center piece.

In a visit at the camp last February, Malik even gave the Philippine Daily Inquirer a tour around his camp, where he was also celebrating his birthday. He said the original "pagoda" only had three stories. It became bombed by the 2005 fight with the military.

He said the camp was powered by a generator, while solar-powered panels supply energy to their high-frequency radio communications system.

Malik told the Inquirer that in the event that the "pagoda" were destroyed by the military again, "I will rebuild it by telling friends, a story it will be a five-story pagoda."

He promised to "rebuild and add another floor" as a way of keeping tab of the military's attempts to move on the camp. He said the original "pagoda" only had three stories. It became bombed after the February 2005 attacks.

"The military can not use the camp because I allowed it. It was the result of negotiations so [there] is no fighting," Malik also said during the interview.

He also showed off their three-storied pagoda-style "modern" pantheon, according to him, at the foot of the mosque. Inside are engraved historical tarpaulins could not be penetrated by bullets because the "bullets get trapped" in the stone.

OIC urges gov't, MNLF to stop fighting

Front page, A1

hour near Pamanan, killing two soldiers and a child living outside the facility, and wounding 19 others.

2 Malik camps overrun

The military struck back and overran on Sunday Malik's camp at Barangay Kilalag in Pamanan town, Basilan said.

Two of Malik's men were killed in the encounter.

Sporadic fighting was reported in the area yesterday and casualties were expected to rise as a force of 3,000 Marines and Army Special Forces continued to track down Malik.

Another Malik encampment in the nearby town of Tabiran was seized during the weekend.

Some 8,500 families comprising 42,000 people have fled their homes in Pamanan and Tabiran, most of them heading toward Isabela town, according to the Office of the Presidential adviser on the Peace Process.

Reports was asked in a news conference in Manila whether the military was taking Malik's camp to force him to the negotiating table, he said:

"Not in my mind. I'm not privy to that kind of [discussion]. I'm not involved in the negotiations."

Reyes said he did not think Malik would be compromising would join Malik's fight.

Malik isolated

Reyes also said the military did not sight most MNLF hostile Nur Misuari having lured to Malik's side and agitated the military Misuari is under house arrest in Manila on charges of rebellion that his accusation for 2000. Malik is also wanted by the

"This is no serious talks solely to think that's why other MNLF commanders are not supporting him. "Mr. Misuari is much too old to not forgetting the MNLF organization but were targeting the group of Malik," Reyes said.

He said Malik staged the offensive are is said to become "the operational commander of the MNLF" in Sulu.

Reyes also said the military had been collaborating with the MNLF in the pursuit operations on Abu Sayyaf, which has been linked to Ameen Muktadir, once

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Pacquiao back today ...

Front page, A1

Hall at 9:30 p.m.

"The whole country is rooting," Antonio said. "He will make his triumphant exit at the City Hall, and we will build a motorcade where hundreds of thousands of our people will flock to greet him."

"Manny is a national treasure," Antonio added.

He said he expected a "wild" welcome for the Filipino ring legend.

Pacquiao is expected to give a congressional report on his victory over Morales.

Pacquiao is also slated to appear on Wednesday before a joint session of the House and Senate.

The motorcade route

The motorcade will start at the Manila Ocean Park and move on to Roxas Boulevard.

Then it will enable the caravan to take a left turn at the Quirino Grandstand, then proceed to Taft Avenue, Ayala Avenue, Makati Avenue, Paseo de Roxas, Ayala Avenue, Buendia, Pasong Tamo Extension, Magallanes Interchange, Nichols, Epifanio de los Santos Avenue, Balintawak Cloverleaf, North Luzon Expressway, Mindanao Avenue, Quezon Memorial Circle, Elliptical Road, Quezon Boulevard, Roxas Boulevard, Padre Burgos Avenue, Manila City Hall, Taft Avenue, Pedro Gil, Pablo Ocampo Sr. Avenue, Vito Cruz, F. Torres, Gil Puyat, Quirino Boulevard, Roxas Boulevard, Dewey Boulevard, Del Pan, Zaragoza, P. Gil, Mercury, Ayala Land, Newtown, Road, Senator Edwardo Rodriguez Avenue, Roxas Boulevard, Miranda, Pedro, Mendiola, Legarda, Hidalgo, Palanca, Jones, Jacinto, Dr. Carreon, Tayuman, A. Francisco, Nolasco, Dimasalang, San Andres, A. Luna, Pres. Quirino Quezon, Adriatico reach for them in Zoo.

Organizers did not say why the lanes on the motorcade have to end at the zoo.

Asked if the motorcade might be a problem with the Commission on Elections (Comelec), Antonio said there was "no reason" why the welcome celebration in Manila should be changed.

"We've done this with all his wins," he said.

First class

Antonio's son Ali, a candidate for Manila mayor, will join the motorcade.

Mayor Atienza invited all who wanted to welcome Pacquiao to stay along the streets. "We will pass by all the districts," he said.

As when he came home after knocking out another Mexican boxer, Eric Morales, last January, Pacquiao was to fly first class via Philippine Airlines Flight PR-113, which was to make a stopover in Guam after departing Los Angeles.

Airport authorities said Pacquiao's wife Jinky and his first relative would board the flight, which was scheduled to touch down at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport Terminal 2 at 4:30 a.m.

The 28-year-old boxer's fans and party mates had requested airport access passes to welcome him but, as before, only Mayor Atienza would be allowed to wait near the arrivals, where Pacquiao would emerge after disembarking the plane.

Motivation

A boxer's welcome for Pacquiao, who is running for a seat in Congress, will not violate any election laws, Commission on Elections Chair Benjamin Abalos Sr. said yesterday.

"Let's not allow him that. Here's welcome. It just so happened that he's a candidate. But he's a hero," Abalos said in a media briefing.

He said that welcome ceremonies for Pacquiao would be organized in any part of the country, even in General Santos City, where he is running against reelected Rep. Darlene Antonino-Custodio.

But Abalos advised the media, especially the television networks and radio stations, to give Custodio equal exposure as the fight is of fairness.

"Give others a chance too, to be interviewed by her," Abalos said.

Abalos said that the reintroduction of Pacquiao as a congressional candidate before the fight is the strongest statement of his election bans.

"It's not an endorsement but a statement of fact that he is a congressional candidate," Abalos said. With a report from Nikko Dizon

GenSan also ready

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—If MCL, his mother and congressional son for Malik for being super like Manny Pacquiao in his hometown tomorrow, city officials said.

They will be the grandstand's audience for Manny," said Jose Pascual, coordinator of the Pacquiao Champ Movement (PCM).

Some 200 motorcycles, 20 cargo trucks and 800 motorcycle riders are expected to join the kilometer motorcade with contingents from the 10 districts city government, Pascual said.

Mayor Pedro Acharon Jr. told the Inquirer that the city would definitely not call the motorcade for the ring star, but he knows the crowd knows that upon of Mexican challenger Jorge Solis in San Antonio, Texas, on Saturday (Sunday in Manila).

Acharon confirmed the grandstand will stand between the gymnasium and the airport. Pacquiao and the mayor will ride on a float designed by the city government.

The motorcade will pass through seven barangays and major thoroughfares before proceeding to the Dual Trunk control road for a press conference.

Pacquiao reportedly called up one of his political rivals, Bernadita Constantino, to skip his instructions to Acharon with regards to the welcome preparations.

"Let us be political to Bernie's sentiment," said Pacquiao's message as relayed by Constantino to reporters. —Agustin Cosme, Dagupan Bureau

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The **AFP Retirement and Separation Benefits System (RSBS)** invites interested parties to purchase by way of sealed bids the following properties / company shares of stocks / golf club shares on "cash", "as-is, where-is" basis

Item No.	Description	Location	Minimum Floor Price
SF-1	1.5 million shares of stock of Anonymous Dent Corporation	100 hectare residential lot Barangay Brgy Ramon, Makagtu, Batangas (near Evercrest Golf Club)	P862,500,000.00
SF-2	Rivera Golf Club Shares 640 Class A Shares 864 Class B Shares 560 Class C Shares	Riviera Golf Club, Incorporated, Silang, Cavite (Two 18-Hole Championship Golf Courses)	P1,152,000,000.00 (selling 40% controlling interest in Riviera Golf Club, Inc)
SF-3	1,677,027 sqm industrial lot	Batong, Marong, Bataan (beside Hyatta Lands, Anvaya Cove Project)	P419,000,828.00

The following properties will also be sold by way of sealed bids on cash or term basis (min. 50% down payment; 18% interest rate p.a. max. 5 yrs to pay)

SF-4	House & Lot Lot: 230.0 sqm Flr: 240.00 sqm	1668 2nd Street, Felix Estate, Pasig, Manila	P3,681,210.00
SF-5	House & Lot Lot: 329 sqm Flr: 167 sqm	B18, Lt. 6, Rosario Bayview Subd., Sucat, Muntinlupa	P2,468,340.00
SF-6	House & Lot Lot: 148 sqm Flr: 46.25 sqm	B6, L 17, AFP Housing Village, Bel-Villaba, Rizal	P632,810.00
SF-7	351 sqm residential lot	B48 L26 Can-Hil Subd., Quiotemann, San Fernando, Pampanga	P321,886.80
SF-8	469 sqm residential lot	#245 Concepcion, Bo. Rio Chico, Gen. Trias, Kawit, Cavite	P229,071.80

For interested parties, please note the following activities that will be held at the Board Room, RSBS, 4th Camilo Osmena, Camp Aguinaldo, Q.C.:

Pre-Bidding Conference: April 25, 2007 10:00 a.m.	Deadline for Acceptance of Sealed Bids: May 3, 2007 10:00 a.m.	Opening of Sealed Bids: May 3, 2007 10:15 a.m.

Bidding documents shall be available starting April 18, 2007 at the Property Management Office, 3/F, RSBS Bldg., Camp Aguinaldo, Q.C. at P500.00 each.

For inquiries on item SF-1, please call Frank or Irene at 912-0098/911-4071 loc. 281
For inquiries on item SF-2, please call Yna or Tammy at 911-6714 / 912-4724 / 912-0920
For inquiries on other items, please call Lea or Daniel at 912-4718 or 911-4071 loc. 268

'Command vote' rising, says SWS

Front page, A8

Aside from local leaders, heads of religious groups also believed to deliver "blue votes."

Iglesia ni Cristo is said to be "volatile" enough to be relied on to vote as a bloc, with a potential of easy million to three million votes, former Sen. John Osmeña, a member of the Genuine Opposition, said last week.

Osmeña called these votes "critical" especially for senatorial candidates in the 11th, 12th and 13th placed "because the margin between winning and losing candidates is only 500,000 to 700,000 votes."

For his part, Manuel "Billy" Soriano, leader of the Catholic charismatic group El Shaddai, has drawn up a "Final List" of 10 candidates whom he will endorse to the group's members, said to number between four million and five million.

However, El Shaddai has not been proven to vote as a solid bloc, according to Lorenzo.

In the rest of Luzon, the percentage of people who feel their family's lives have not by their leaders when to vote for candidates from 8 percent in March 1998 to 13 percent in April 2001, and from 14 percent in April 2004 to 18 percent last February 2007.

In the Visayas, the number increased from 12 percent in 1998 to 17 percent in 2001, and from 17 percent in 2004 to 23 percent two months ago.

In Mindanao, the percentage doubled over the past eight years—from 11 percent in 1998 to 15 percent in 2001, and from 20 percent in 2004 to 23 percent in February, 1993 data show.

The stability of "command voting" did not change in Metro Manila over the years—at was 13 percent in 1998 to 17 percent in 2001, and 13 percent in 2004 and in February.

The survey also found that unusual voting's stability was "positive in rural locales (22 percent) than in urban locales (13 percent)," SWS said.

The survey was conducted from Feb. 24 to Feb. 27 using face-to-face interviews with 1,200 adults. They were divided into random samples of 200 each in the Metro Manila and rest of Luzon, the Visayas and Mindanao.

It had a margin of error of plus-or-minus 3 percentage points.

Early this month, presidential adviser Gabriel Claudio said that the administration's campaign machinery would allow Team Unity to check a 23-O victory in the senatorial election.

He said the administration's "complete dominance" in the elections was possible "because 90 percent of all the candidates' officials were with the administration."

But SWS found that a significant number of voters would support opposition or independent candidates.

Inquirer Research Department

Hostage takers charged with serious illegal detention

By Allison W. Lopez

BUSTAMANTE TAKERS ARMANDO 'TUNY' DAUDE and Cornie Carbonell will stay in jail after they were charged yesterday with 27 counts of serious illegal detention, a nonbailable offense, and other offenses.

The two were also charged with two counts of slight illegal detention and violations of the election gun ban at the Manila Regional Trial Court.

The city prosecutor's office released a seven-page resolution finding probable cause to press charges against Daude and Carbonell after both hostage-26 children and three teachers-inside a bus parked at Ilo Residencia Hotel on March 28.

The hostages were safely released, and the Manila Police District (MPD) recovered two firearms and two grenades from Daude.

'Untenable'

The resolution, recommended by a panel of prosecutors, said Daude's contention that there were no complainants was "untenable."

It said that while the children's parents would not press charges, the policemen who filed the complaint were "competent persons."

They were Senior Insp. Edgar Reyes, SPO2 Bernardo Cani Ilao, SPO1 Rogelio Carbonel, PO1 Jerry Campos, Supt. Rogelio Rosales Jr., Supt. Rodolfo Llanes and Senior Insp. Jones Belejo.

The MPD charged Daude and Carbonell with violation of Article 267 of the Revised Penal Code (serious illegal detention) and Republic Act No. 9162 for violating the election gun ban.

Chief prosecutor Jhemp Lopez, however, dismissed the charge of illegal possession of firearms and explosives because, he said, the two grenades that Daude carried with him were not live.

Caravel

"We are very much depressed with what the prosecutors decided," said William Antonio Sarmiento, Carbonell's lawyer, in a phone interview. "They did not consider the fact that the parents have already said they gave their consent to their affidavits."

The teachers, he said, also refused to press charges.

About 700 residents of Pascua Compound in Tondo, where Daude operated the Miamor Daycare Center, including his family members, rallied in front of the City Hall yesterday in support of the accused.

His elder daughter, Irene, broke down in tears and hugged his brother, Lauro, upon learning that her father was charged.

"Why did it result in that? That's not right! We didn't expect this because we were one with the parents," she said.

Daude and Carbonell will remain detained at the MPD because of the nonbailable offense. Illegal detention carries a penalty of life imprisonment.

Lydia Encinares, one of the parents who will not press charges, assailed the resolution and blamed Manila Mayor Lito Atienza for it.

"Whatever happens, we still support Daude. He (Atienza) was just embarrassed by what Daude did," she said.

Daude and Carbonell are also facing a separate case of 26 counts of child abuse filed by Celerina Sangil, head of City Hall's social welfare department. Lopez said the child abuse charges will be assigned to a new prosecutor.

"We are confident that the case will prosper in court," said Lopez.

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NEW YORK ANTI-AGING CENTERS

Labor groups seek full tax exemptions for poor workers

By Jaroussa Aseng

PETS YESTERDAY DEADLINE IN THE filing of income tax returns, both the moderate Trade Union Congress of the Philippines (TUCP) and the left-leaning Partido ng Manggagawa (PM) called on the government to give 100-percent tax exemption to low-income earners.

TUCP spokesman Alex Aguilar said workers earning P15,000 and below per month should be exempted from paying income taxes, which eat up between 12 percent and 18 percent of their personal income.

"Freed from income tax burden, already no better treat to health, education and other day-to-day expenses," Aguilar said, adding that poor families usually have only one breadwinner who receives the daily minimum wage of P350 or less that gets eroded by inflation.

The PM said workers earning below the daily cost of living—which ranges from P466 in Eastern Visayas to P1,051 in Manila Windows—should be exempted from paying income taxes and that bigger taxes should instead be levied on the rich.

The group picketed the Bureau of Internal Revenue main office in Quezon City yesterday to protest "regressive taxation" and ask the government where the taxes paid by workers went.

PM secretary general Judy Ann Miranda said workers had the moral ground to ask whether their taxes went to social services or were lost to pay illegitimate debt, fill the pockets of corrupt officials, and indirectly subsidize corporations enjoying tax perks and privileges.

According to Miranda, workers are the most diligent taxpayers since their taxes are withheld even before they receive their wages. On the other hand, capitalists are allowed to declare their income and the taxes they owe pay, he said.

"No wonder seven out of 10 professionals and capitalists are tax evaders, while only one out of 10 fixed income earners do not pay correct taxes," she said, citing government statistics.

Aguilar said improving economic conditions and rising tax collections warranted tax breaks for workers.

"It makes business sense for the government since income tax exemption will benefit millions of workers, motivate Filipinos to seek employment, boost the economy due to increased consumption and savings, and ease poverty not for long run," he explained.

Miranda, agreed, adding that tax exemption were better if it could not be certain that the taxes taken from workers' incomes were lost to the form of public services.

She pointed out that of the P1.1-trillion budget for 2001, 26 percent is allocated for debt servicing, matching the amount allowed for social services.

Only P221 billion will actually be spent for social services since 36 percent of the P310-billion is for payroll, she said.

Billions of pesos more, she added, will be lost to graft and corruption in that setup just the minimum 15-percent corruption leakage pegged by the Philippines by the UN Development Programs, only P195.36 billion was probably realized as classrooms, books, medicine and houses.

"That means only 17 percent of the more than one trillion budget is actually spent for services that may be availed by the people," Miranda said.

The PM also pointed out that the government's own data indicated that tax breaks and incentives for foreign investors meant revenue losses of P462 billion from 1999 to 2000.

"The Filipino workers have indirectly subsidized foreign capitalists since it is local taxes that make up for these uncollected revenues," Miranda said.

TAXPAYERS rush to the Bureau of Internal Revenue office in Manila to file their income tax papers. AFP PHOTO

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Tuesday, April 17, 2001
2nd Week of Easter

1st Reading: Acts 4:32-37
Gospel: John 3:7-15

Jesus said to Nicodemus, "Don't be surprised when I say 'You must be born again from above.'

"The wind blows where it pleases and you hear its sound, but you don't know where it comes from or where it is going. It is like that with everyone who is born of the Spirit."

Nicodemus asked again, "How can this be?" And Jesus answered, "You are a teacher in Israel, and you don't know these things!

"Truly, I say to you, we speak of what we know and we witness to the things we have seen, but you don't accept our testimony. If you don't believe when I speak of earthly things, what then, when I speak to you of heavenly things? No one has ever gone up to heaven except the one who came down from heaven, the Son of Man.

"As Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, so that whoever believes in him may have eternal life."

Commentary:

The apostles' church was one mind and heart, owning all in common and sharing among all whatever is needed. They witnessed to the resurrection and no one in the body of Christ was in need because all shared of what they had. One of these is simple Barnabas—the son of encouragement who will play such a large role in the Acts with Paul. He comes and has his property before the apostles.

Jesus continues to teach Nicodemus about the power of the Spirit of God that goes where it will and comes to us when it will. He tells this scholarly of the line of Man who has come down to earth and was lifted up so that all who believe might have life in him. This whole section is one of the earliest pieces of regular gospel—what was taught to the new believers after their baptism—to draw them deeper into the life of the body of Christ through the power of the Spirit. As we evening deeper into the mysteries of what it means to believe in and live as a follower of the Son of Man. Crucified and Risen!

Nueva Ecija, Palawan polls worry Abalos

By Nikko Dizon

COMELEC Chair Benjamin Abalos Jr. yesterday expressed concerns over the peace and order situation in Puerto Princesa and Palawan, even as he promised to meet with top military and police officials to assess the security in Abalos's hometown.

"I am more concerned with Nueva Ecija and Palawan because of the [various political rivalries there]," Abalos said in a media briefing.

Mr. in Malabon, augmentation police forces would be deployed in those provinces for additional security, he said.

Nueva Ecija, Palawan and Maguindanao are among the 23 provinces identified by the Comelec as "areas of concern" in election-related spots.

According to Comelec spokesperson James Arthur Jimenez, the other provinces are Iloilo, Western Samar, Bacolod, Cagayan, Isabela, Abra and Lanao del Sur.

On Thursday, Abalos will visit Abra, which has been placed under Comelec control. The Comelec chair is also the commissioner in charge of this.

Abalos will hold a consultation meeting with Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon, Philippine National Police Director General Oscar Calderon and area officials to determine the need to deploy military troops to maintain the fragile peace in the provinces.

"The Comelec does not describe the situation in Abra as 'contained,' meaning no threat to public safety," Abalos said.

He said the presence of military troops in Abra would be to "neutralize" the private armies.

"Abra normal rapos 'nuestro dyan' (There's nothing strong with it) because let's face it. There are areas in the province where the dominion of the police, considering they are always with the civilian authority, could give some impression of partiality. It's always that bias that I have to consult dun [to people]," Abalos said.

8 owls freed in Quezon

AFTER SHELTERING the birds for months, the Protected Areas and Wildlife Bureau has released eight Philippine scops owls, locally called "tarasoc," to the forests of Tayabas, Quezon.

The PAWB said a tree hospital that the owls would have more of their kind in their new habitat.

The scops owls (*Otus megalotis*) prefer lowland evergreen forests but are dense. They breed throughout the year, resulting in two or three eggs per brood.

The owls' population has dipped from hunting and habitat destruction, Antiporda noted. Secretary Angelo Reyes said, "While the scops owls are endemic and widely distributed in the country, its existence is now threatened," he said. TJ Burgonio

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

OPINION

A major issue

EDITORIAL

GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO IS ONE OF THE major issues, if not the biggest issue, in the May 14 elections. The coming elections will be a referendum on her administration and on the way she has governed the country in the past six years. Administration apologists and allies may deny it, but that appears to be the reality. And it is a fact that has been validated by a recent survey of the Social Weather Stations which indicates that seven opposition, two independent and three administration candidates are in the winning circle in the Senate race, and another SWS survey which shows that a plurality of registered voters would vote for opposition candidates for representative, governor and mayor.

What the voters are saying is that they don't want the way Ms Arroyo has governed the country, but they cannot oust her out, and elect a new president in her place, because the presidency is not at stake in the coming elections. They will have to wait for 2010 when, it is hoped, Ms Arroyo will bow out of the presidency and give way to the president-elect. That is, if she and her political allies will not come up with new plans that will allow her to stay in power beyond 2010.

The sources of the United States indirectly conducted a referendum on President Bush during last year's midterm elections, and they indicated that they did not want the way he ran the government by ruling in a predominantly Democratic Senate and House of Representatives. Here, if the trend in the surveys continues until election day, Ms Arroyo may suffer a similar fate.

Why are the voters dissatisfied with Ms Arroyo? Actually, it is not just a feeling of dissatisfaction but one that is mixed with fear. The people are afraid that the country is not just creeping but hurtling fast toward a fascistic, dictatorial regime propped up by the military and the police. The country appears to be heading toward a repeat of Marcos' martial law, but this time, no undeclared de facto martial law.

There are the presidential proclamations and orders: Presidential Proclamation 1017 declared a state of national emergency and gave the military and the police very broad powers. Applying Mr Arroyo's calibrated preemptive response, the police suppressed the people's freedom to protest, held rallies and seek a redress of their grievances. Executive Order 464 prohibited government officials from testifying before congressional committees without the permission of the President. The people, through their representatives, could not have access to information—a right that assures transparency and accountability in a supposedly democratic country like ours.

The President and her military minions are denying to death—both figuratively and literally—that the military or its agents are killing hundreds of leftist militants and activists. The slaying of journalists continues unabated because of a culture of impunity. Pace harangues in Metro Manila have been militarized, although the generals have promised that the soldiers would be withdrawn before May 14. Soldiers have also militarized and mown four in colleges and universities that have camp militants and activists. The Arroyo administration is slowly killing the policy of democratic pluralism that was allowed to bloom by President Corazon Aquino after the Edsa Revolution.

Oh, but we have put rice on the people's tables, and the improving economy has made it possible to give those other necessities and vital services, the Arroyo administration says. But again, surveys seem to indicate that for the majority of the people this is all a mirage. The improvement of the economy has benefited largely the rich and the privileged. The so-called economic benefits have not trickled down to the poor. An SWS survey in March showed that 19 percent of the country's families or 3.4 million households experienced involuntary hunger in the past three months. Unemployment is still at a high 7.9 percent. And when people are unemployed, they have no money with which to buy food and other necessities.

Mimicking former US President Bill Clinton, Ms Arroyo and her allies may say, "It's the economy, stupid!" But even granting that there has been some economic improvement, it seems that the people are not satisfied with the supposed economic benefits which are enjoyed largely by the rich and which have not trickled down to them. Many continue to be hungry, jobless, poor. And a great majority is afraid of the slide of the country toward fascism and dictatorship. That is why Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo is looming as one of the major issues, if not the biggest issue, in the coming elections.

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Those 'mom & pop' stores

VIEWPOINT

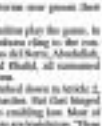
Juan L. Mercado

"EQUAL ACCESS TO OPPORTUNITIES FOR public service" remains elusive for most Filipinos, the business-friendly Social Weather Stations said in its Sunday column titled, "The case against political dynasties." Ramon Magsaysay Inc. does best predicting challengers. Harold Stassen (R-Minn.) ran seven times for US president. Jesse Ventura (I-Minn.) was governor of Minnesota. Ross Perot (R-Texas) ran twice for president. Each time, he spent millions of his own money. Ditto for Michael Bloomberg, mayor of New York City.

Dynasties dump goodwills on home bases, it notes. Senate President Manuel Villar's family spreads some Las Piñas. "The patron is a relative of the Pimentels in Agusan del Sur, the Aquinos in Tarlac, the Magsaysays in Zambales, the Lopezes in Quezon, the Osmeñas in Cebu, the Zubiris in Bukidnon, the Cayetanos in Taguig, the Enriles in Cagayan de Oro and Davao, the Ejercitos and the Duterte-Carpio among dominators, the pools of money and vote source.

The SWS survey records opposing children, sisters, in-laws as governors, board members, councilors, councilors, barangay captains. Wise Singson spread eagle over Ilocos Sur. In Surigao, the name is Ortega/Ecleo/ Barbers and Erwin named the congressman's clique, Priscilla and Bernie mere spectators. Here Vice-Gov. Bridget Chyngbian-Abaya is running for "mayoress sister." This family dogs a well but was families drink from it, "the Chinese say."

Was plague reborn perhaps during provincial feuds rule Bataan, as Espinas do Bilinan. The media haunted Ramon Revilla's corpse when they're locked into family interpolitan sovereign. It overlooks budding dynasties. Bukidnon con-



THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

SOME YEARS AGO, I WROTE A COLUMN THAT seemed to have caught the imagination of the world, enough for the International Publishers Association in Hong Kong to give it its best column award for 2002. That column was called "Remembering." It had to do with the first anniversary of 9/11.

In that column, I said I shared the grief of those who lost kin and friends in 9/11, having lost kin and friends of my own in New York. They could very well have been among the dead. I empathized completely with those who demanded that we never forget that ignominy and remember it instead with all the bravery we could muster.

But I also said that I was bothered by the kind of remembering America was asking the world to do. Specifically, I said:

My trouble with it is that it forces remembering also outside a grand forgetting. At the very least, what that means is that we are no other pain but America's. Not the pain of other victims of terrorism, not the pain of the victims of unjust wars and occupations, not the pain of the victims of state domination, often of America's making.

Indeed, not the members of the Afghan wedding party who fell victims to George Bush Junior's smart bombs. Not the women and children who died in the bombings when the Israeli army went into whole quarters of Palestine. Not the hundreds of thousands of innocent Iraqis, many of them Red Crescent volunteers, who were sent to the bosom of allah by George Bush Junior's smart bombs. Unlike the dead in 9/11, they will forever remain nameless and faceless, held captive forever in the impersonal and brute facts even harder to stick in the minds of Cleft Sentences.

I guess for those who died in 9/11, that I do not see why that grief, and those of others, should be raised to a vision of the world that beats like a heart. I guess for those most of us remember it. I cannot see how we honor the dead by turning their bones into cenotaphs and unholy relics rather than letting them mingle with the bones of the other dead in recognition

of our common humanity.

I remembered that after I saw pictures of Gloria Macapagal Arroyo spread out on the front pages of newspapers since last week in various expressions of anxiety, grief and tragedian. Most of the pictures were taken at St. Luke's, where she had taken up camp and kept vigil for her ailing husband. Some of the pictures showed religious figures praying over her. One picture even had the public official raise her head in invocation of divine grace.

Blessed—or cursed—as I am with the gift of empathy, or being able to put myself in another person's shoes, I forgot my political convictions for a while and wondered how it must be to be the one on those vigils. Having experienced it, me, or many occasions, keeping vigil over a relative or friend while he or she went under the knife, and with his or her fate depending not just on the precision of the doctor but on the disposition of heaven, I knew those were agonizing times when one is forced to resort to prayer. There are no atheists in the foxholes it was as they say. Nor in the operating rooms of hospitals.

One may add that there are no kings or beggars in those places either. There are only bodies, beings in all their vulnerability, in all their haggling in all their flesh and blood frailty. We all stand equal in the court of death, awaiting judgment.

But for the same reason (which was why I remembered what I said about 9/11), I wondered why we couldn't feel the same empathy for the pain of our fellow human beings, nor to speak of sympathies, who are thrown in that state. I wondered why we couldn't devote reams of front pages or decades of prime time to showing

this unnecessary ordeal by the late 19th century thereafter class save the centuries turned toward the family as the sole bosom of security" in the face of repression. "The Americanism celebrated by writers was seen enough to symbolize and validate the native elite, which became synecdoche/Symbol."

Steinem's Mary Beth Norton documented how the political party system merely provided formal structures within which family dynasties grappled for power. And interests that dynasties bring into the political arena are not long-term commitments but short-term extended families.

Year 2007 dynasties will not challenge today the monopolization of power by ruling families any more than they did when the Journal analysis was published before married Imee "Bernie" Marcos and Gregorio "Gringo" Honasan II fought, crocheting family connections, this elite is uniquely capable of dealing media and preserving itself," the Journal noted. This elite has developed into a deceptively unified "family conquer" with a narrow range of economic and social interests. Despite their rhetoric, they make no overt denial of modern, reason-known environmental.

David notes the most modern impact, "as expanding group of administrators and growing literacy and education and citizen awareness." Philippine society has not remained static.

Cebuano's Mindanao Cross reports that an 11 year-old Cebu S student at Notre Dame University's electoral education program wrote: "Will Mr. Biggins become a good student just because his name sounds like a green leafy vegetable? (Annotation: Candidate Petitay. I find will Mr. Petitaple' he is good student just because he gets to another" (Interview: Sec. Mar Roxas.)

"But the mechanisms of mobility now present in the structure, operate as powerful screening devices to prevent the assent of revolutionary or even reformist leaders through legitimate channels," Norton added.

Mom & pop stores will remain, for now.

E-mail: jmanilamercado@gmail.com).

Empathy

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE A9)

the grief, heartfulness and despair of those who wait for word of their loved one who has disappeared. Or worse, who heard before the cold body of their father, or spouse, or child, wailing over the inexplicable injustice wrought by human and earth. I wondered why the fact that we, one of St. Luke's should not make us see the faces...than multiply by the day...in the less brightly lit corners of the country.

I wondered why the dark cloud that had left us on Malacañang for a week shouldn't make us more acutely aware of the pitch darkness that has fallen on the land for many years now.

At least the people we find at St. Luke's can count on the best medical minds, or hands, to push their loved ones from the jaws of death. Their existence can be savaged, such as it is possible to do that, by the thought that everything is being done to save their loved ones' lives. The kin and friends of the victims of the killings can only mourn on the people who have their husbands and siblings and children torn the jaws of death is quite possibly the same as them. Their survivors can only be incensed as they stare at the dagger in the shoulder wrought with the agents of death hovering outside, keeping their company in that lonely vigil.

At least the people we find in St. Luke's can only blame the hand of heaven, or wherever else it came from, for telling the ones they hold dear to their hearts that it is time. The kin and friends of the victims of the killings can only blame the hand of hell, or its intellectuals manifestations, for digging the graves of those closest to their hearts.

Blessed...or cursed...as I am with the gift of empathy, I can only identify more with those who kneel prayerfully on the pews of hospital chapels begging heaven to work a miracle and bring back life to the dying, but blessed—or cursed...as I am by the same gift, I can only say cue in fury and despair begging earth, or this country, to work a miracle and give justice to the dead.

Life and death are often strange things. Sometimes, the dead are still alive, and sometimes the living are already dead.

Pacquiao endorsed 'internationally'

I'M NOT A DE ROSSIE FAN, BUT OVER THE last few years, probably because we haven't had a celebrity in a while, I always made it a point to watch the Rights of Manny Pacquiao. I must say that in his bouts with undefeated Mexican champ Jorge Solis in Texas last Sunday, Manny fought an incredible fight, the likes of which we won't see in a while. He fought like a wounded lion up to the end against the Mexican champ. Reports say, however, that his trainer, Freddie Roach and Aaron Pancrazio, were "unimpressed" because they felt Manny "was not fighting smart" and was "too aggressive." His no-fan fans and psychotic millions around the country, he didn't look like he was trying anyway. He wanted to rush in and hit Solis hard, reasoning that the latter's long powerful arms repeatedly pummel him.

Pacquiao took a lot of blows, but the turning point was when a head butt left an ugly wound over his eye. At that point, he probably got wary of getting hit in the head, and began fighting in a more cautious manner. That was when he decided to go for the KO, and knocking a few blows to get close enough. Manny bombed away in and pummeled Solis again and again until he fell down. The referee finally stopped the bout to give the unwelcome. What a fight it was!

By the way, many people were amused when the guy who announced his victory was called Jose "Lupit" Lupinacci. Lupit is probably the first time a Filipino-sounding was endorsed internationally.

His Manila experience drew the whole station, including political candidates, swapped to watch the fight. But MAR Manila said Sunday morning he Dagupan City to check out how Speaker Jose de Venecia was doing in his fight against Representative Marlyn Primicias-Agabas. Pilipino Star ngayon's fighting for his last congressional term, had just left the house, but he rushed back before massacre to watch the fight.

It was interesting to watch JDV during the fight. He is a fight fan who reacts very quickly by uttering no word and shouting no emotion. I was sitting beside him in another chair and screaming at the top of my lungs, and felt conscious from the backlash of the public murder, which, to me, remains unexplained. JDV remained calm and cool, noting that Guam's Governor Lamis predecessor former Immigration Chief Al Hernandez (who is now running for mayor again) wrote Lino's soul. Dagupan was a first-class city whenever we drove. Today, they claim, it's second-class city. Yesterday, it's the first of bankruptcy.

Governor Opposition candidate John Henry Dumlao called to explain why he's questioning the candidacy of Governor Amado Espino Jr. Pabo. Sixto this party line is lower votes. He pointed out that the survey's field work was supposedly conducted from April 3 to 5 among 1,800 respondents, and the results were presented soon after. Dumlao pointed out that the field work does left on Holy Monday to Holy Thursday, when many people were off on excursions or on the beaches, while the processing was done on Good Friday, when many people were working on those days! he added.

Dumlao also said various surveys contained big money, with Pabo Asin's survey reports, costing P300,000 a copy, collected first by around 300 donors, including contractors and businessmen. Yesterday, Dumlao was scheduled to go to the Comelec to present the investigation into the operations and methodology of poll survey companies. He is not the first to question the accuracy and credibility of the surveys. Some officials of the administration coalition fear that some surveys could be using the basis for questioning results should Nene Pimentel's camp's majority of the votes.

Lino is reportedly saddled with serious campaigning before the Comelec on during back to his seat as chief of the duty five days as well as a P100-million loan from the Landbank to build the public market, which, to date, remains uncompleted. JDV maintains that the loan is being the classic virtue of Lino's predecessor former Immigration Chief Al Hernandez (who is now running for mayor again) wrote Lino's soul. Dagupan was a first-class city whenever we drove. Today, they claim, it's second-class city. Yesterday, it's the first of bankruptcy.

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Media outfits should help 'protect the votes'

DIRT OVER THREE FOOLS, TELEVISION, radio and print media were the elections. Unfortunately the coverage is dated by the spirit of competition (among media networks) only, never by the desire to protect the votes or the integrity of the electoral process.

The objective of having clean and honest elections is now possible with the advent of high-tech gadgets such as the cell phone. If the "transparent poll watch groups" (you) their viewpoints and reports via the media, perhaps, even the rowdy and corruption-prone automated election could become unnecessary.

What is necessary for now is to make the election laws, particularly on poll watchers, more effective. Poll watchers must be sworn in. Maybe, we should eliminate the need for counseling parties to be represented by lawyers. Instead, the oversee should be done by a committee of non-partisan persons of known integrity, impartiality and honesty. The owner of the votes be the president, vice president and senators should be covered less by national TV, as in the recount of votes for local positions, this should be covered by local TV.

This joining of forces will definitely ease the financial burden of their assignment, and the television stations can make the electoral process more entertaining.

For this purpose, here are some suggestions:

1. Poll watch groups must organize and post their counselors.

2. Select at least two very reliable persons of youth (of every barangay) to act as field reporters in their respective barangays.

3. Equip them with cell phones with cameras.

4. Take pictures of the IDs from each precinct duly signed by the head of Election Inspectors) after the counting of votes and send them to all participating television and radio stations and media.

5. The TV stations may show the data as to precinct number, barangay, municipality and province where the IDs came from—to impose upon the viewers that the documents are genuine and indeed secured from polling precincts nationwide.

6. The student's name may be kept for his protection (anyway, the organization has earned recognition of the cell phone toilet or urinator).

7. The accumulated votes must be simultaneously aired by all participating TV and radio stations and printed in dailies.

8. Participating TV stations should not air other shows until the conclusion of the canvassing.

Contemporarily, all TV stations will have similar results. If the Comelec will show a different result, the aggrieved candidate can always seek the help of the participating TV and radio stations to prove us wrong.

By scanning and going back to their IDs to compare with the Comelec-provided copies of the IDs, interested parties can easily locate the particular precincts where cheating occurred. And by focusing on such discrepancies, electoral protests can then be awarded to and attended to the interested party.

—MERCURIO T. LAGUMBAY
12723 Alexandra St.,
Poblacion, Mara, Compostela Valley

LETTERS

Law schools don't make intellectual giants

I MAY AGREE WITH SEN. MIRIAM DEFensor-Santiago that there is no intellectual giant among the senatorial candidates in the coming elections, but, I strongly disagree with the premise that intellectual giants only come from the University of the Philippines College of Law. Inquirer, 2/20/07). Knowledge of law or being a lawyer does not make a person an intellectual giant.

As a matter of fact, looking at the educational behaviors of most lawyer-candidates, one can't help but wonder if they have an intellect at all. What scares this reader most is the ever-growing ethnic among "educated" Filipinos today—they no longer have moral consciousness. If you are not worth their much loved, unedited, pro-do-nor bribing. If you are not a graduate of one of the exclusive schools for the rich, you do not belong. Their concern for the poor is nothing more than lip service, especially during election time.

The most scary aspect of all is that most Filipinos nowadays hungry today more often than they did in the past, as surveys show. You cannot find the body the most guns hungry, too, if the root conditions are not addressed. Therefore, we could become a republic of ecstatic and insecure people. (Some are beginning to be as insecure "Mens sana in corpore sano" (A healthy mind in a healthy body)?

—CECIL PAKALNA,
cepeakl@hotmail.com
11560-88 "B" Ave. Delta, B.C., Canada

Congress should have cut number of congressmen and senators

CONGRESSIONAL LEADERS INCREASED the push hazel from Ph2 billion to P11.4 billion in the 2007 budget. According to Budget Secretary Rolando Andaya Jr., the bicameral conference committee that reconciled the House and the Senate versions of the 2007 budget bill, trimmed the push to its original allocation—from P40 billion to P70 million for each congressman and from P120 million to P300 million for each senator.

On the other hand, the allocation for the retirement and terminal benefits of government workers was slashed by P3.6 billion (from P18.7 billion to P15.1 billion (Inquirer, 3/16/07).

Instead of reducing the retirement and terminal benefits of government employees, we should lower the number of lawmakers. At present there are 236 congressmen (212 district and 24 party-list) and 24 senators. Why not reduce the number of congressmen to 176 (representing 168 and 16 proportional) and the number of senators to 17 (representing 16 regular regional and one nationwide) instead? This is possible by amending Sec. 5 and Art. 7, Art. VI of the 1987 Constitution.

According to Rayan Mota Sep. from Dumaguete, when a congressman takes the stand to defend a privilege speech, all the others stand up and face that person). Mostly because he has to listen speeches.

—ELICIO B. PASTORAN,
Sunnyville Subd., Concepcion I,
Marikina City

'Garci' lawyer seeking revenge vs Pimentel

THIS IS IN REACTION TO THE NEWS story "Lawyer files graft raps vs Pimentel" (Inquirer, 4/4/07).

In the midst of responsible journalism, the business should have first asked me to explain such a scandalous but not just unverified hearsay pronouncement. If there does, about the whole world is instrumented by land lines and cell phones and the internet, I can literally join a senate's diverse many levels the incumbent editorial officers. Instead, my disappointment is.

Supposing, for the point not true (he complains), Ed Sanvicente, acted out of malice and ignorance of the facts.

I do not mail letters—affidavits personally—from my office. Neither does my son, Agustino Pimentel III. In my office, letters are mailed under the authority of a director under instruction to use my franking privilege only in accordance with law.

When I first heard that letter of the letter, I was not even surprised as a misuse of my franking privilege. I immediately confirmed a speedy disappointment into the matter.

The findings were:

1. The director in charge of mailing and his assistant in mailing the questioned letters. A non-lawyer, he believed that the contents of the questioned letters were not purely personal or political. In fact, the bulk of the letters answered the need to prevent alleging hearsay, to safeguard the integrity of the election process, and to uphold the rule of law. There are no letters that contradict statements of the commissioners of clean elections and free, democratic-based government, and part of my duty as senator, to share with my constituents.

2. Being a decent man, and realizing that the matter could be misconstrued as a violation of the franking privilege law and could set up an electoral campaign issue by my political opponents, the director resigned and I accepted his resignation.

The passage stamps has been duly paid upon my orders.

It is, then, clear that neither I nor my son committed any corruption or violated any law here.

What is clear is that Sanvicente is no longer of hope must resort to a vile attempt to discredit me and my son, in need to work with me and has vowed to bring me down politically for the reason, among other things, that I did not back him up as candidate for mayor of Cagayan de Oro City in the 2004 elections.

He is also the lawyer of Virgilio Garcillano of Hello Garci fame, whom I would like to see punished in accordance with law. His charges must necessarily fall for naught.

I, therefore, knowing the facts, humbly charged the—and dragged my son in the process...for the alleged misuse of the franking privilege of my office; and

2. Intimidating to incriminate Sanvicente.

Finally, allow me to express my deepest concern that the Inquirer has opportunity been used to air the vile views of individuals who are nuances in character assassination.

—SEN. ADRIANO G. PIMENTEL JR.

Question revives an old lesson from the past

THE LETTER "S HARSH QUESTION 20 years from now" (Inquirer, 9/4/07) gave me a tingling sensation in the spine.

When I was younger, I used to ask my parents how in the world could they have allowed Marcos to have his 6th and why they didn't do anything to oppose it, why they tried to keep away from its oppressive ways, by subscribing from the city to the province; why they weren't among the brave souls who took to the streets to fight it?

Evil triumphs where the good does nothing to oppose it. This is a nugget of wisdom from an old saying. Let us sit back from the past and, in our little ways, do something to stop the creeping the times in our times.

—ROSE CHRISTINE PINE,
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Cainta, Rizal

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Across the NATION

Cops sent to secure priest bet

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL Police has assigned two policemen to secure Pampanga gubernatorial candidate, Fr. Eddie Panlilio, starting on Monday following reports of an assassination plot on him.

Panlilio is running against incumbent Governor Lilia Pineda, who is linked to gaming and dark of money from gambling.

Sheryll Lingkakumbans, Panlilio's campaign manager, said reports about the threat to the priest have spread through text messages since Friday.

One rebuts purportedly came from a group that called itself "Ito Ngayon Gumbuyan" was in the works.

Panlilio, 53, said that although police investigators ruled out threat and posed danger to him, he did not want to be complacent and so presumptive-need police security.

"I believe in God, but I have to use my head and not just stand to take care," he told the reporters by phone from Hyderabad, India where he had went to.

In the last 15 days of the campaign period Panlilio has been swarmed only by his brother and some cousins.

"I believe that people have sensed that to of some people when I agreed to lead this crusade for moral leadership and good governance," he said.

Senior Supt. Ruth Magtas, the police director in Pampanga, said the security detail to Panlilio was "just precautionary and his haircut purposes."

"That is a temporary setup. The policemen are with him to serve as his police liaison for area security and traffic management. (Panlilio's) motorcade on Easter Sunday covered motorcycle escort," Magtas said, referring to the 16-km convoy of vehicles that day.

Chief Supt. Jaime Robinos, Central Luzon police director, said the assignment of the policemen was done as a "precautionary measure" for the priest's safety.

The Commission on Elections has yet to give its final approval on request of Panlilio for security detail.

Magtas said two other gubernatorial opponents—incumbent Gov. Mark Lapid of the Lakas-CMD and Board Member Lilia Pineda of the Kabalikat ng Mabuhayang Pilipino—have been given police liaison officers each.

Lapid, son of Sen. Manuel "Lito" Lapid, and Pineda, wife of suspended jueteng lord Rodolfo "Boy Pineda, have maintained their respective sets of security personnel during the election season.

Fr. Benjamin Beltran Gabaing said he was worried for the safety of the priest. "He's so vulnerable. He has everybody come up to him," Gabaing said.

Panlilio, an activist during martial law years, was released in 1981 after military agents seized him at his parish in Angat, Pampanga, that year.

Lapid's campaign manager, Fidel Asuncion, said the governor, 56, has not encountered any security risks so far.

"Some priests, who have talked on illegal gambling, received death threats even before Among Ed (Panlilio) first his candidacy," Asuncion recalled.

"I would not repeat if these came from the camp of Eddie (Panlilio)," he said when pressed for details.

Pineda, 56, said she should "not come under any suspicion because she has not and will not resort to violence (or excesses to win in elections)."

"I have fear in God," she said, adding that she has been receiving death threats since the eight-bid campaign since December last year.

"But I chose to be quiet and to tread safe panels," she said. Evandro Ordaz, Inquirer Central Luzon

Seized rights worker's kids cry for their mom

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
Inquirer Visayas

ILOILO CITY—"GIVE US BACK our Nanay."

This was the appeal of two daughters of Elle Jaclet Rose Dionisio-Sule, spokesperson of the Justicia ng mga Biktima ng Desisiones Lalaan sa Interamin at para sa Amanecita Holdal in Panay in her abduction.

Dionisio, 32, and Sule, 10, both 28, chairperson of the militant Bagong Mymmong Makabayan (Bayan), were riding in a pick-up truck when unidentified men on board at least two vehicles stopped them in Barangay Calaan, Santa Barbara, Iloilo on March 30.

The truck driver, Jose Elle Bernabeo, local information officer of the human rights group Karapatan, was shot and wounded in the chest there. He is still treated at the intensive care unit of the Iloilo Doctors' Hospital.

The vehicle was badly burned when it was covered in a explosive held to broken two-hour later.

Calling for the release of their mother and family, May Wee Bernabeo, 26, and her sister Thomas Melbelle, 15, said they were aware that hundreds of extrajudicial killings had happened in the country especially directed against militant party-list groups.

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Army says NPAs busy with campaign fees

POSTERS of Buan Unity candidate Lorenzo Tayag Jr. (left) and Tagbilaran City vice mayor Jose Antonio Veloso Jr. displayed in a commonpower area.

LUCENA CITY—COMmunist New People's Army (NPA) rebels have optwithdrawn on their old faction of the so-called "permit to campaign" (PTC) fees from candidates in Southern Tagalog that conduct military offensive against government targets, according to the spokesperson of the armed Front Southern Luzon Command.

Lt. Col. Rhodelek Panapio said rebels had been around eighteen of communist guerrilla in different areas in the region but the rebels always evaded direct confrontation.

"It seems that the rebels are concentrating on their extortion activities, particularly with their collection of the so-called PTC rather than engaging government forces in combat actions," Panapio said.

He said the Bukidnon has confirmed reports that some candidates have acceded to the communist rebels' demands.

However, he did not identify the candidates who already paid PTC fees to the NPA.

"We can't just reveal their names. It's not that easy. Once we disclose their identities, they will surely deny it. It will be their word against ours," the lieutenant colonel said.

However, Panapio said the military has formed a special team to monitor extortion activities and document those dealings with the communist guerrillas.

"We're still in the process of collating all the information on the activities of the so-called PTC for submission for this year's election," he said.

Panapio revealed that there are 23 rebels in Quezon province that are classified as "areas of concern" by the Commission on Elections and 46 listed as "areas of immediate concern."

He identified "areas of concern" as those areas with intense political rivalry, past history of election-related incidents and presence of a certain armed group, while "areas of immediate concern" are those municipalities with more than half of its territorial jurisdiction under the influence of the NPA. Jeffrie Mallari Jr., Inquirer Southern Luzon

Army, mayor say only 20 families fled Samar area

TACLOBAN CITY—MILITARY OFficials said a town mayor here falsified reports by a nongovernment organization that 40 families abandoned their homes in a mountain barangay in Eastern Samar because of abuses allegedly committed by army soldiers.

Mayor Marcos Rivera of Oquendo town in Eastern Samar told that only 20 families left Barangay Mahayon, not 40 as claimed by the Leyte Center for Development (LCDE).

Police the LCDE conducted its relief mission on Thursday, the families had gone to the town proper to receive food assistance, such as rice and noodles, Rivera said. "That is why it appeared that 40 families left," he told the Inquirer by mobile phone.

Jeanne Ampatuan, executive director of the LCDE issued in St. Jude, earlier said that she got her information from the Mahayon village chief Napoleon Lozano, who claimed that military abuses forced the residents to leave.

Rivera denied that soldiers from the 34th Infantry Battalion, which is based in Quinapondan, Eastern Samar, were involved.

Lt. Col. Gleoilen Dela, the battalion commander, called up the Inquirer to dispute the claim, too. "Our troops are there in the area not to harm the people from but to protect them from our enemies. That is the main premise why we are there," he said, adding:

"It is unfair to let accused that we are committing some abuses (here)." Joey Gallares, Inquirer Visayas

RELOCATION SITE

Vice President Noli de Castro and National Housing Authority general manager Federico Lacsa (third from right), inspect a condominium unit in Northville 5 in Bocaue, Bulacan for workers who had to be moved out of the Paseo de Magsaysay of the Philippine National Railway line.

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Ship passengers stuck at sea for 15 hrs

By Jhunnex Magallanes
Inquirer Visayas

CEBU CITY—MORE THAN 500 SHIP passengers were stuck at sea for more than 15 hours after the vessel they were riding ran aground off Masaplod, Leyte.

The Coast Guard said the MV Santos Star of the Cebu Inland Shipping Lines came from Ubian, Southern Leyte, and was bound for Cebu City when it drifted into shallow waters.

The vessel ran aground at 11:45 p.m. Sunday afternoon of the Naval Light Station in Masaplod, said Chief Petty Officer Inocencio Andal of the Manila City Coast Guard station.

The vessel left Ubian, Southern Leyte at 7 p.m. on Sunday carrying 349 passengers, including eight infants, and 51 crew and officers. It was scheduled to reach Cebu City at 5 a.m. Monday.

But as of 2 p.m., passenger Jelyn Ang of Asuncion, Cavite, said the vessel was still in the area where it ran aground.

Ang blamed the vessel's driver for the accident, saying the vessel previously failed to follow its usual course and, instead, went into a shallow area.

She said they were already sleeping when they suddenly felt the vessel shaking.

Fortunately, the vessel's engine did not stop and the lights were not cut off, Ang said in a Tagalog phone interview.

However, she said the passengers had to connect with lack of facilities the vessel were only sure there were fencing passengers to buy cooked noodles to fishermen who approached the vessel.

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ARMM polls heat up

MAGUINDANAO, MAGUINDANAO—TWO warring political clans rushed for two days here over the weekend that killed two fighters.

Involved were armed followers of Maguindanao Governor Datumanong and Sultan Mastura, incumbent mayor of this town, and his vice mayor Norodin Mulalam, Chief Supt. Joel Goltiao, police chief for the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), said.

The skirmishes began on April 13.

According to Goltiao, fighting erupted when an armed group of Mastura's political ally, former ARC (Association of Barangay Captains) president Mohammad Andoy clashed with Abraham supporters, allegedly led by Datu Ali Mosay.

Mosay's alleged henchmen were members of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) under "Commander Conan."

MILF spokesperson Eid Kabalu has confirmed the clashes but denied the involvement of his front.

"This is personal rather than organizational," he said of Conan's alleged involvement.

Pagalungan is the only town where there are clubs for the position of mayor.

Candidates for governor, mayor and councilors in 25 other towns are running unopposed.

Goltiao did not identify the fatalities, except to say that "each camp had one down."

He sought the deployment of additional troops.

Political tension is high in Datu town with Mastura's slogging it out with Mamanalo ano, Otto, in the mayoral race. —Charlie Saloso, Inquirer Mindanao

Unique Earth Day in Punta Fuego

ON A CLEAR, SUNNY March day over a hundred volunteers flocked to the shores of Pescamalta and Tamarao de Punta Fuego in Batangas, Batangas for a unique Earth Day celebration.

Armed with sacks and bags and smiles, the small army prepared to search the waters of Punta Fuego in search for wayward trash in the resort's coastal cleanup activity.

The groups were divided into two: Volunteers who would be searching in the shallows, and divers who would be searching in the deeper waters. The two groups were further divided into small groups that were assigned to different coastline clean-up areas.

This is the second time that Punta Fuego played host to the cleanup, although the beaches could hardly be called dirty or polluted.

Punta Fuego boasts of fine white sand and pristine clear waters and is one of the best places for swimming in Batangas.

However, the panoramic paradise is not immune to environmental hazards. Although the waters have maintenance crews that are responsible for the daily upkeep of the beach, there is still a small amount of debris from other areas that are swept into the surrounding waters.

A VOLUNTEER returns to shore after doing her part in cleaning the coastal area of Punta Fuego of debris carried to waters. —CHARLES MANTANGUIL

However, many debris, brought by waves, has become a concern for the resort's developers and residents.

Lyndon Ardit, the company that developed and maintains Punta Fuego, has always emphasized the value of responsible land ownership among its employees and neighbors.

Hopefully, the coastal cleanup will generate environmental awareness among the resorts' members and stakeholders.

"No one else but ourselves can save beaches, our mountains and their endemic fauna," said Mary Antonio, Punta Fuego's PR manager.

"Therefore, it is our responsibility to take care of the beaches and the waters around them. If we do not save for our own sake, then nature has provided us, we do it a great injustice."

HONG KONG VOTE
A policeman stands guard outside the Bayanihan Kennedytown Centre in Hong Kong Monday where the official polling precinct for the absentee voting in the Philippine senatorial elections is located. At right, a Filipino resident in Hong Kong casts her vote.

NEW NURSES
Nursing graduates of De los Santos STI College of Health Professionals pin their caps at graduation ceremonies held at the LRT Theater in Diliman, Quezon City, Monday.

15M Pinoys live on $1/day, says World Bank

Coverage at 1

78.7 million as of May 2006. (The country's population today is about 88 million.)

Poverty measures, based on an international poverty line, attempt to hold the real value of poverty constant across time and place to show when making comparisons over time.

The commonly used $1-a-day standard, measured in 1985 international prices and adjusted to local currency, is typical of the poverty lines of low-income countries.

Growth, China factor cut poverty

The World Development Indicators 2007 pointed out that an average 5.9-percent annual growth in per capita gross domestic product since 2000 among developing countries helped cut poverty rates.

Another key reason for the decline in dollar-a-day poverty was China's massive poverty reduction between 1999 and 2004 that trimmed East Asia's extreme poverty rate to 9 percent in 2004.

In the rest of the developing world, good economic performance and slower **poverty numbers** offset a rise in the sheer number of poor people.

In Sub-Saharan Africa, 298 million people were living in extreme poverty in 2004, practically the same as that in 1999. But the number of poor people had increased consistently in the previous two decades.

Inequality worsened despite growth

The report found that, in the past decade, economic growth did not substantially lead to poverty reduction.

In some countries and regions, inequality worsened because poor people did not reap the fruits of economic expansion. A lack of job opportunities, limited education or poor health aggravated the situation.

"Growth is essential in reducing poverty, but it isn't the only factor. The WDI [panel] beyond growth and poverty rates to ask how income is distributed, whether health care and education are improving, and to assess the business environment. These factors all affect the quality of people's lives," said Francois Bourguignon, World Bank chief economist and senior vice president for development economics.

The WDI estimated that the share of the poorest quintile in the Philippine national consumption or income was only 5.4 percent.

A quintile refers to any of five equal groups into which a population can be divided according to the distribution of values of a particular variable like poverty.

Other indicators for RP

Other development indicators for the Philippines were:

- Malnutrition under age 5 averaged about 20 percent from 2000 to 2005, or, to modestly downig from 30 percent in 1990-1995.
- Elementary school completion rate increased to 97 percent as of 2005 from 86 percent in 1991.
- Ratio of female to male enrollments in elementary and high school was 1.06 in 2005 compared with 1.04 in 1991.
- Mortality rate of children below age 5 per 1,000 births fell to 33 in 2005 from 63 in 1990.

Detailed picture

Through data, WDI 2007 provides a detailed picture of the world.

It includes, for example, information on health expenditures, on transport and other infrastructure services, on the quality of public sector management, on Internet access, on access to improved water sources, and on carbon dioxide emissions.

The World Bank has used performance assessments of governments as a basis for allocating funds for many years since the mid-1970s.

In the annual Country Policy and Institutional Assessment, or CPIA, bank staff evaluated country policies and institutions covering four main clusters—economic management, structural policies, policies for social inclusion and equity, and public sector management and institutions.

WDI 2007 listed the most recent CPIA data for the 36 countries eligible to receive grants or credits from the International Development Association (IDA), the World Bank's funding arm for the poorest countries.

CPIA indicators measure the extent to which a country's policy and institutional framework supports sustainable growth and poverty reduction and, consequently, the effective use of development assistance.

The 11th edition of the WDI looked at countries that have done unusually well over the past decade. It found strong performers in all regions, with notably fast growth in GDP per capita among many countries in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union.

Worrying

But it also found that the countries with the highest rates of under-5 mortality a decade ago had, on average, made the slowest reductions in mortality.

"These results are worrying," said Alan Gelb, World Bank director of development policy. "The fact that under-5 mortality is 15 times higher in low income countries than in wealthy ones is a cause for concern of how far we still need to go," he said.

The World Bank acknowledged that international comparisons of poverty estimates entail both conceptual and practical problems in countries have different definitions of poverty.

Local poverty lines tend to have higher purchasing power in rich countries, where many generous standards were used, than in poor countries.

Citing national benchmarks in the Philippines as of survey year 1997, for instance, the World Bank report said the percentage of the population below the poverty line was 36.8 percent.

Rural areas had a higher poverty ratio of 50.7 percent compared with 21.5 percent in urban areas.

5 suspected car thieves clad in police jackets killed in shootout

Coverage at 1

on the hunt.

Asked why the three were not charged at all during the gun battle, Traffic Management Group Director Chief Supt. Edgardo Tinio said: "I wouldn't [want to] put [it on] safety measure that the encounter was moving."

Pan said it was possible that during the chase, neither side fired targets.

It was after the suspects had gotten out of their vehicle that their negligence—setting up no-man's-land—was passed it on them."

He said one of the suspects was armed with a shotgun and another with a 9mm pistol, and that the police car suffered damage.

New group?

Pan said that he would meet with officials of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group in Makati, Bulacan, because of information on the group's alleged illegal activities.

"It looks like this is a new group because the name Mendiola Tunnels does not appear in the order of battle of TMG," he said.

Police reports said the incident occurred at around 3 a.m. while members of the TMG mobile unit 13 were conducting routine patrol along Elliptical Road.

TMG spokesperson Supt. Edwin Relucio told the investigators the operatives spotted the maroon Revo "suspiciously circling Elliptical Road as if its occupants were looking for something or someone.

A hot car

Upon verification, Mobile 11 learned the license plates of the Revo had been the subject of a flash alarm from Camp Crame, causing it was on the watch list following a report that it had been stolen.

The suspected car thieves were now the victim of 3M Bullrins, when six-five-rounds from Carolina arrived.

At the vicinity of the Holy Rosary chapel along Bellaso, the five men retired they were being tailed and, with a shotgun, fired at the patrol car, hitting its right rear bonfire, Bonacon said.

Bonacon said the five men jumped out of the Revo and started to run to different directions, prompting the lawmen to fire at them.

The five men were also wearing police caps over mixed pants and rubber sandals.

Three visitors

A police memorandum prohibits the sale of police paraphernalia and uniforms to civilians and investigators suspect the group had an accomplice within the police organization.

A source from the Scene of the Crime Office (Soco), who requested anonymity because he was not authorized to speak to media, said Hero Angeles—for finding a man who identified himself as a police inspector assigned with the Manila Police District—had asked for Tuason's body, claiming that they were relatives.

They were directed to go to the Provincial Funeral Homes.

The source was not able to disclose the name of the supposed police lieutenant.

The TMG spokesperson said that upon verification, police learned that the Revo with license plates had belonged to an Iloilo Commercial, which was forcibly taken from the owner, Frederick Dollet, in City in June 2005.

The three, on the other hand, was stolen from an Xhina Rodriguez in Midtown Village, Cainta, Rizal, with the chassis and engine number matching the "Revo" vehicle.

They also possessed said they recovered two .45 cal. pistols, a 9mm cal. pistol, a shotgun and a hand grenade from the five men.

They also said they found tools for removing car plates, as well as four silver license plates, ZAP-876 and XHS-770, hidden in the vehicle.

Advice to motorists

Inso personnel also recovered from the site two shotgun-ample shells, seven M-16 Armalite rifle slugs, six .45 cal. pistol slugs and 16 empty shells from a .9mm caliber pistol.

In an earlier interview, Pan said the **slain men belonged to the Tabas** outpatching group operating in Quezon City.

He said the group would pretend to be policemen and flag down motorists in **dark areas** he supposed **traffic violations.**

Once the unsuspecting motorists alights, the gang would take the vehicle at gunpoint.

They said the group usually operated in the Quezon City area, particularly around the South Triangle, Elliptical Road and Timog Avenue.

Haven in Marilao

The group would take the stolen cars to Marilao where its appearance would be **changed to avoid detection. The vehicles** would then be sold to the Visayas and Mindanao regions.

Pan said the TMG recently recovered 23 vehicles from Carpenter de Oro, Davao and Cebu City which were stolen from **Metro Manila.**

Pan advised motorists that legitimate police checkpoints were set up in well-lighted areas and manned by policemen in proper uniform.

"The proper uniform of our policemen are the complete blue uniform, not jackets and sweatshirts only," Pan said.

An estimated 2.7 vehicles are stolen every day in Metro Manila, according to statistics from the PNP.

In 2006, there were 1,004 encoding.

Sniffer dogs Lucky and Flo debut in Makati raid on pirated DVDs

Coverage at 1

of the Motion Picture Association International through their mails.

Eds Manzano, chair of the Optical Media Board (OMB), said his men swooped down on Makati Cinema Square in Makati City, St. Francis Square in Mandaluyong City and Metrowalk in Pasig City.

The two female dogs—wearing neon vests stamped with their names—sniffed through glass cabinets, bags and boxes. The pirated discs they found included movie releases such as "300" as well as "Home" and "Spiderpolice."

In the three latest shows, Manzano said his men seized at least 200,000 pirated discs and arrested 13 people.

"In of press time, the discs, which are currently being inventoried by OMB personnel, number 400,000 pieces. At 960 per hour, that's a total of 926 million. So far, 13 people have been arrested," Manzano said the business after the raids on the three malls.

He said the arrested vendors faced charges of copyright infringement and violation of anti-pornography laws.

"They violated Article 201 of the Revised Penal Code," Manzano said. "Most of the items seized were child pornography movies. As a father, I find it reprehensible."

Neil Gane, MPA-International senior director of operations, said movie pirates in Malaysia had reportedly offered a US$14.2M (some P1.9BD) bounty on each of the dogs, whose weekend arrival in Metro Manila was kept secret until Monday's raids.

Gane said he hoped Lucky and Flo—reportedly the only two dogs in the world trained to sit as fewer when they sniff polyethylene—"could be matched" can apricot discs—would escape such **wrath in the Philippines.**

"Lucky and Flo will be here for a considerable amount of time and we will be going all over Manila, and we will be going all over Manila, and we will be going all over the Philippines," Manzano said.

"As you can see, the dogs have been very, very effective," he added. "They have a 100-percent hitting average.

FILE PHOTO of the two black Labrador sniffer dogs, Lucky and Flo, who became **celebrities in Malaysia for sniffing out massive stashes of counterfeit DVDs.**

Those dogs could smell pirated discs through walls."

Manzano thanked MPA-International for bringing the sniffer dogs to enforce not only pirated copies of Hollywood movies, but also child pornography and Filipino, Korean and Japanese films.

Gane said an MPA-International survey last year showed its member companies lost US$1.3 billion (some$66 million) to pirates in the Asia-Pacific region, and US$6.1 billion (some$3 billion) globally.

Outlining several dens and pointing to **similar logos on their plastic covers,** Gane decried that makers of pirated "Cinderella II" discs were the same ones churning out child porn.

Own canine unit

Manzano said his office was considering putting up its own canine unit because of Lucky and Flo's success.

"We're looking for possible sources of funds. Training dogs would cost a little, maybe a million pesos and would only be done once," he said.

"They are the Starsky and Hutch of the Motion Picture Association," said the dogs' trainer, David Mayberry a Northern Ireland senior investigator of the Federation Against Copyright Theft.

Fact: Starsky pair of buddy cops, "Starsky and Hutch," starred in the 1970s on US television and in a recent Hollywood film.

Reports from Reporter Jun Bingo and AP

NEWS

Lawmaker faces ammunition raps

BASTA TUBO
i-MOLDEH
MO!

By Tarra Quismundo

AVIATION POLICE YESTERday filed criminal charges against Laguna Rep. Danilo Bueser for allegedly carrying bullets and a pistol magazine at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport two months ago.

Senior Supt. Aidiane Miranda, chief of the Philippine National Police-Aviation Security Group (PNP-ASG), said the case of illegal possession of ammunition was finally filed against Bueser before the Boac City Prosecutor's Office after the PNPAVSEG legal office completed its documentation.

"We might be accused of filing the charges as an act of political harassment or malicious prosecution if we went ahead without having complete documents. We had to make sure that we had sufficient grounds to file the case," Miranda said in a recent interview.

While he had reportedly denied carrying the seized ammunition, Bueser said he was willing to face the charges for his own sake.

DAVID

"That's a welcome development so that my name will be cleared. I will go through the legal process. If I'm innocent, nobody's above the law," he told the Inquirer in an interview last week.

Bueser was intercepted at the final X-ray check of the Main Commercial Terminal's International departures wing at 9:22 p.m. of Feb. 16, while on his way to San Francisco on Philippine Airlines flight PR-114. He alleged that the bullets and pistol magazine were planted in his carry-on bag—an alibi that aviation police then had belied based on evidence-security footage.

He was briefly held at the Boac police office but was later "turned over" to Barangay del Norte Brgy. Prosperos Pelayo.

The evidence include a ballistic examination report from the PNP Crime Laboratory proving that the 38 SPO-red bullets found in Bueser's bag were live.

Statements of witnesses were also submitted to boost the case.

"There were legal and technical issues that we had to consider," said Miranda.

The case constituted a violation of Republic Act No. 8294, which penalizes the unauthorized possession of firearms, ammunition and explosives.

Aviation police, however, set aside charges of violating the Commission on Elections' gun ban as it did not cover ammunition, said Miranda.

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GMA extends visit to China

BOLSTERED BY HER FLAMBOYANT-MINDING health, President Macapagal-Arroyo is extending her China visit from a 72-hour trip to the southern island of Hainan to two days, or April 20-21.

The President will be attending the annual conference of the Boao Forum for Asia, a nongovernmental organization committed to promoting regional economic integration.

"It will now be on Boao on April 20 to 21 and only in Boao, as all agreements that may have had to be signed in other areas—because I will also temporarily visit Shanghai and Shenzhen—should be done in Boao if the signatories agree," she said in a pooled interview.

Malacañang's Foreign Visit Secretariat had initially planned a weeklong trip which could have taken the President to five key cities—Boao in Hainan, Chongqing and Chongqing in the province of Sichuan, Shanghai and Shenzhen.

But it had to drastically scale down the presidential itinerary after Vice Governor Jose Miguel Arroyo was taken to the hospital for a 14-hour open-heart surgery to raise a thrombus in his aneurysm.

Mr. Arroyo and billionaire Bill Gates will be among the high-profile speakers in the forum, the first prestigious regional event for leaders in government, business and academe to take place after summit.

The forum is committed to promoting regional economic integration and bringing Asian countries even closer to their development goals. Michael Lim Ubac

30,000 infants to be immunized

THE UNITED NATIONS CHILDREN'S FUND on Monday launched a massive immunization and health campaign in Mindanao.

Under an agreement with the 12,000-member Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), Unicef is to provide basic health services to 750 small villages on Mindanao and other southern islands.

Unicef's country representative for the Philippines, Nicholas Alipui, said: "It is time for us to bridge the gap and reduce the stark disparities that affect children in the Philippines."

"We are building bridges that will help consolidate peace and development as we work together to bring about more investments in programs for children."

Unicef said some 30,000 infants would be immunized against preventable diseases between April 16 and the end of June.

The health services would cover many of the poorest areas of the Philippines and would eventually include vitamin supplements (beginning with Vitamin A), a life-saving programme and measles shots for 36,000 expectant mothers.

The joint memorandum signed by Unicef and the MILF also called for the delivery of "additional basic services," including "birth registrations, malaria control, educational supplies," and the setting up of "community-based health programmes to reinforce these."

Most of the target villages were chosen by the MILF. The campaign will be jointly managed by the MILF development agency and Jesus Dureza, President Macapagal-Arroyo's adviser on peace talks and the Moro crisis.

"The Guns of Peace campaign requires a minimum of cold measures of ceasefires from clashes to facilitate maximum delivery of services for children," the joint communiqué said. AFP

Aplus METRO
Editor Rose G. Cipriano

SC clears Las Piñas judge of harassment

High court finds complaint filed was a retaliatory act

COOL BREAK
A farmer gives his carabao a refreshing dip in Tamsui, Marikina City, in the heat of summer.
JOVEN CRUZ

By Leila B. Salaverria

THE SUPREME COURT HAS EXONERATED a Las Piñas City Regional Trial Court judge of a sexual harassment complaint filed by a court clerk.

In clearing Judge Manuel Dugan of Las Piñas RTC Branch 197, the high tribunal said the administrative complaint against him for "insulting a person's morals and decency" was apparently filed by the clerk whose salaries and benefits were withheld because of habitual absences.

Sharon Alegria, a clerk at Branch 197, alleged Dugan kissed her on one occasion when he called her to ask about her absences. She said she acted as she refused her marital pushing to him.

She also said the judge asked for her a date or another occasion when she brought him Golden Tilte-flavored ice aganmi mai of four, but did not appear for work the day before the supposed date. The complainant said she stopped going to work because she knew she would receive memoranda, adding that her salary and other benefits were withheld.

Dugan denied the alleged act of sexual harassment and said he talked to the complainant about her absences that were causing her to neglect her duties as a clerk.

He said Alegria went to his office crying, talked about her problems, then apologized and promised not to be absent again.

On the alleged date, the judge said the complainant was with a process server who wanted web her in his chambers. Dugan also told the high tribunal that prior to the filing of her complaint, Alegria was issued several memoranda that asked her, among others, to explain why she failed to prepare an order and to furnish a party with a document.

Alegria was frequently absent from work from September 2004 to February 2005, and stopped reporting for work in March 2005, he added. She was then sent a letter asking her to explain her unauthorized absences or she would be dropped from the rolls. According to the high court, Alegria failed to show evidence to prove her allegations. It also said Dugan's version of events had no "inherent weakness."

"Most damaging to complainant's cause is that, based on the records and uncontroverted circumstances, there appears to be a strong motive on her part to make up charges against respondent judge," it said in the April 5 resolution.

The hearing officer found that the sexual harassment complaint was filed several months after the alleged incident—the complainant did not tell her father, a Las Piñas police officer, about the incident when she met him after the supposed assault, but told a colleague about it, and the complaint was filed after the judge wrote letters to withhold the salaries and other benefits of the complainant, a habitual absentee whom he sought to remove from his court.

C5, Commonwealth link to be widened

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC Works and Highways (DPWH) is preparing to widen the narrow road connecting C5 Road and Commonwealth Avenue to ease traffic in Metro Manila.

Public Works Secretary Manuel Bonoan said part of the budget for this project was already included in the 2007 budget of the DPWH.

He said the demolition of structures along the affected area would take place once work starts on the narrow road beside the University of the Philippines in Diliman. He did not give a timetable.

Bonoan said negotiations between the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority and the UP administration were already ongoing for the project.

The proposal is to have this stretch connected to Katipunan Avenue, which could lead to the Valenzuela City stretch of the North Luzon Expressway, Bonoan said.

The DPWH official announced they were also able to bid and award "most of our projects [and] up this year before the election ban."

HOW TO SET UP AND MANAGE AN NGO OR FOUNDATION SEMINAR, Special Session: April 28, 2007, (Saturday). Topics: Getting organized: SEC/BIR requirements: Complete project cycle overview: How and where to source funding: Best practices & techniques: Sustainability: Financial management. Rotinville Hotel, 286 EDSA, Mandaluyong City, 1-5 PM. To register, call Tribun Knowledge Center Publishing at 876-8833, 531-0084, CP: 0919-229-9777, 0919-238-8180, 0915-780-4379 or email: tribun@pldtdsl.net or ibuy_ph@yahoo.com. Limited seats only. Register Now!

Recycling profitable for Metro mall goers

By Margaux C. Ortiz

MALL GOERS NOW HAVE A CHANCE TO do their share for Mother Earth and earn money at the same time.

To kick off the Earth Day celebration on April 22, SM Supermalls officials announced yesterday the opening of waste trade stations in 20 of their malls all over the country.

The move aims to create awareness among their patrons on the importance of recycling.

Under the project, which started in SM Megamall in February, people can trade waste products with participating recycling companies and get paid for it.

"Through this endeavor, we are hoping to share with the public the idea that we all have to work together to save the environment," Rina Ng, president of SM Prime Holdings, told reporters in an interview with reporters during a memorandum of understanding with Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Secretary Angelo Reyes at the Old Megamall.

Annie Garcia, SM Supermalls president, said the waste trade stations would open in all SM malls on scheduled dates throughout the year.

"Our goal is to open the waste trade stations on a regular basis by the middle of 2007," she said.

Garcia explained that 1.5 million shoppers visit SM's 20 malls every day. She said 12 malls were in Metro Manila.

"Filipinos love going to the mall. My plan is to utilize those malls' trading markets aspect of their face," the SM Supermalls president said. She said while the markets would open once every quarter in the provinces, SM malls in Metro Manila could have them every month.

"That is because Metro Manila residents usually purchase more goods because of urban living," Garcia explained. She said the trading markets in SM malls would open more regularly as members of the community become more aware of their responsibilities.

At the waste trading markets, people could exchange a cup paper or cardboard with cash worth more or less depending on the prices of recyclable materials.

Empty ink and toner cartridges could be traded for quality remanufactured ones while plastic bottles and plastic scraps could be exchanged for plastic household items such as lampers, bottles, pails and trash.

Customers could also trade discarded lead acid batteries or car batteries for handheld clock-up ringtones.

Participating recycling companies also buy junk electrical equipment and old or broken appliances, used household batteries from cars, voltage regulators and busted rechargeable lamps, polyethylene bottles and other plastics, aluminum and tin cans, and used ink and toner cartridges.

Lyn Silorio, SM Supermalls assistant vice president for operations, said the market also served as a drop-off area for things such as rubber for worn-out/busted batteries; cash or polystyrene and styrofoam scrap; and junk cell phones and batteries.

She added that representatives from the DENR would conduct mini-lectures at the waste trading market to educate the public on the importance of waste segregation.

Garcia said they had also established a tie-up with schools and would hold trading activities and interactive games for children to teach them the importance of losing and saving for the environment.

"We would likewise hold events where families could bring their boats help to the waste trade markets so they would understand and appreciate the idea of waste segregation," Garcia said.

Silorio added that beginning this week, the SM administration would place special events fairs all over the malls to educate their patrons on the importance of segregating sources, plastics and aluminum cans.

"This is the common sense method gone," Silorio explained.

The waste trading markets would be open every second Saturday of the month, in SM Sta. Lazaro, every third Sunday in SM Southmall, and every fourth Saturday in SM Fairview.

The opening dates of the other malls in Metro Manila are: SM Megamall, April 19; SM Bicutan, May 5; SM Sta. Mesa, May 26; SM Sucat, July 7; SM North Edsa, July 14; SM Manila, July 21; SM Mall of Asia, August 11; SM Manila, Sept. 1; and SM Pasig, Sept. 30.

MetroBriefs

Tragedy at family outing

A child, 11, a summer outing turned tragic when a 10-year-old boy drowned in a swimming pool at a resort in Quezon City. The boy identified as Michael Angelo Aying, 10, fifth grader in Barangay Bagbag, in Novaliches was found at the bottom of the swimming pool of the Hyatt Hotel at 1007 Quirino Highway, Quezon City Police District Criminal Investigation Unit (QCPD-CIU) reports revealed that the drowning incident happened at around 2:30 p.m. on Sunday. Prior to the incident, the boy had been with his family and relatives for the Sunday outing here and had even asked for the resort's permission to enjoy a dip at swimming. However, at around 2:30 p.m., the boy, who had been swimming for about 30 minutes, suddenly disappeared. Investigators said the boy was found at the bottom of the pool. He was immediately brought to the clinic of the Novaliches District Hospital but efforts to revive him were in vain. Investigators have yet to state what if the owners of the resort could be held liable for the boy's death through possible negligence that could have contributed to the child's death.

Jonathan E. Antonio

Grocery hit by fire in Pasig

A fire broke out inside a grocery early Friday that almost razed it to the ground, causing P5 million in property damages to the owner, fire authorities said yesterday. The Sunnyboy grocery owned by Marlito Martin Escudero, at the back of the Pasig City Police Headquarters in Brgy. San Jose, Sumilang Street, Pasig City, was totally destroyed by the fire that started at around 4:30 a.m. Investigator Salvador Rosario said the fire started at the right front part of the store. No casualty was reported as firemen were able to control the fire within an hour before it could spread to nearby residential houses. The fire razed the building housing the grocery store and its contents worth P5 million. Rosario said they are looking at the possibility that somebody could have entered the store before the fire to commit acts of burglary. He added that the fire could have also been started from faulty electrical wiring. As a policy in the affidavit, the store owner had requested that the fire truck coming here be shut down and not to use the sirens.

Kristine L. Alave

ELEKSYON 2007

Watch out for 'new' Baclaran

By Julie M. Aurelio

A CLEANER, GREENER, INTELLIGENT Baclaran for shoppers.

This was Paranaque Mayor Florencio Bernardo (LP) pledging to solve the perennial traffic problem in his city, but also to do research of shoppers' or religious devotees' relief back to Baclaran.

The aim is however not only for luring the rest of the Redemptorist church, a favorite destination for Catholics every Wednesday but also to turn a cheap shopping district, too.

New streetlights, public benches and vending stalls are among the features of the major facelift the mayor said. For example, a specific street or road would be assigned for a particular merchandise, such as women's electronic devices, bags and accessories. Multi-level parking facilities will also be added to address the traffic gridlock on Redemptorist Road and Quirino Avenue.

Bernardo added they would also rehabilitate the district's sidewalks with brick pavements.

"With this plan, we intend to disregard the major density of traffic and rationalize the entire trading structure for the convenience of shoppers," he said.

Under the master plan designed by the City Planning and Development's Office, the scheme would enable shoppers to focus on easier time finding the products they are looking for, instead of having to walk through crowded roads.

Bernardo added that the implementation of the project would coincide with the forthcoming construction of the new LRT Line 2 to a landing from Baclaran station to Recto, Cavite.

Election watchdog to monitor Makati

By DJ Yap

AS THE CROSSFIRE BETWEEN Mayor Jejomar Binay and Sen. Ma. Lito Lapid heats, the Pinoy Parent Council for Responsible Voting announced it would closely monitor the conduct of polls in Makati City.

The election watchdog said it plans to field volunteers to the city's polling precincts on May 14 to prevent vote-buying and cheating in what promises to be a closely-watched Makati's mayoralty between the two personalities.

Binay is president of the Genuine Opposition, while Lapid, a movie actor, is a staunch administration supporter who was reportedly asked by Malacañang to run to remove the country's financial center from Binay's control.

Arturo Soriano, local coordinator for PPCRV, recently told members of the Makati Business Development Council that the group would closely watch developments in the local elections.

The PPCRV is composed of volunteers from different professional, business, civil society and church organizations.

Soriano appealed to businesses based in the city to support his group's advocacy for clean elections.

Also present in the meeting was Albert Lim from the Makati Business Club. He said the influential group was fully behind the PPCRV's goal.

Binay welcomed PPCRV's move, saying he was counting on the people to protect their votes.

2 Roberts sign peace pact in Pasig

By Kristine L. Alave

PASIG CITY MAYORAL CANDIDATES Robert "Dodot" Jaworski Jr. and Robert "Bobby" Barrios signed a peace agreement yesterday to observe honest and peaceful local elections.

Chief Supt. Lazaro Tiamzon, chief of the Eastern Police District, said the peace pact should ensure the commitment of the candidates and their supporters to hold clean, violence-free elections in May.

Tiamzon brokered the peace agreement, which was signed at his office in Pasig City. Jaworski and Barrios stood hands before they affixed their signatures to the document.

"There were six of them who were invited to sign the covenant, but the other four could not make it anymore. But did not attend for reasons we don't know," Tiamzon said.

The four other candidates who failed to make it to the covenant were Maryjoline Bolivarius (BELL Nuestro Sikulo (KAMPI), Wynn wright Rivera (PMP), and vice-presidential candidate Armando Viray Jr.

According to the Philippine Nautical Police, Pasig City is considered to be an "area of concern" in the metropolis.

During the past, Tiamzon said he has ordered the police force to be on guard against election-related violence and incidents in the area.

No 'peace' in this covenant

By Nancy C. Carvajal

AS IF IT WAS AN INDICATION OF the city's current political climate, tension erupted in the middle of a two-way prize for the signing of the peace covenant initiated by the police and the church for local candidates of Caloocan City yesterday afternoon.

The forum was organized for the occasion by the Philippine National Police, the Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting (PPCRV), the Diocese of Caloocan City headed by Bishop Deogracias Iñiguez and the local Commission on Elections.

The gathering was temporarily suspended when people in the gallery became rowdy and heckled mayoral candidate Rey Malonzo as he was delivering his speech.

Because of the tension, Malonzo and Rey Asistio, another mayoral candidate, said they decided not to sign the covenant.

Of the four candidates, only incumbent Mayor Recto Bañares signed the agreement.

Pnp Lale "Baby" Sotelo, in a statement read by his son, Marcelo II, said he was disappointed with the implementation of the Fair Election Act until he would only sign the covenant if concerned government agencies would correct it.

METRO

Citizen's Call

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- Out stands in politicos?
- Fed up with cussing and bullying neighbors?
- Is there an everyday role model in your neighborhood?
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INQUIRER

MNLF's declaration of holy war

AS A MEMBER OF SOCIETY THAT BELIEVES in order, I will let the administration of justice run. It comes in the sentence one receiving my son Patrick.

Patrick is old enough to know right from wrong. If he acted up to being accused of, he should suffer the consequences.

But as a father who loves his child unconditionally, I will help my son by giving him a lawyer if he needs one. That is as far as I will go.

* * *

The recovery of Mike Arroyo, the husband of the President, is a miracle and cannot be attributed to the powers of prayers.

When even his enemies and detractors prayed for him, there was no way the ministry would not happen. Prayer means the Road that means the world.

* * *

Filipino street doctors are at par with their world-class counterparts.

Although Mr. Arroyo was given a slim chance of surviving in the first few hours of the operation, doctors at St. Luke's Medical Center did a job that can only be described as breathtaking. Take note of this: The recently-marketed vascular surgeons have proudly boasted with Mr. Arroyo's miraculous recovery.

* * *

Many people expect to see a changed Mike Arroyo—more calm, more laughing and more humble. Mr. Arroyo, after all, was on the brink, too prolific, and came to anger before his wife became the President of the Republic.

* * *

The government should never be alarmed at the declaration of jihad or "holy war" by the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) against our soldiers. Muslim insurgents, even billionaires and executive drafters jihad against their enemy.

So what is the issue?

* * *

The government has been very intent with the MNLF and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF).

Status accord groups have taken leniency as a sign of weakness.

The only time the MNLF got a taste of the government's attack was when then President Estrada declared war on them and ordered soldiers to invade their camps.

Moro had been at war with the government long before the formation of the MNLF in early 1970s. If they're not fighting the government, they fight among themselves.

* * *

I would be happy to be proven wrong, but Manny Pacquiao will win the congressional race in General Santos City because of his heroic exploits over Mexican Jorge Solis.

Most voters are not ignorant; they can't distinguish between boxing matches and moderated senate sessions but will vote for Pacquiao.

If Pacquiao wins, they should put up a boxing ring in the middle of the session hall at the House of Representatives.

* * *

Some camp conglomerates are fortunated and bloodthirsty; they can drag it out to the ring with Pacquiao serving as the referee.

I suggest they also put up a boxing ring in the middle of a courtroom scene where the gates challenge their opponents to a fist fight in front of the judge.

* * *

Even after Bob Ordanes gave a tip to the Philippine National Police that Barangay Capalangan, Apalit, Pampanga, is the source of endless cylinder opera parts, the police have not raided the place.

Makes you wonder whether or not some of them are in cahoots with the thieves.

On Target

Ronnie Ilagan

Ronnie Ilagan is a columnist for the Philippine Daily Inquirer. He is also a commentator for Radyo Inquirer (DZIQ-FM).

Wolfowitz refuses to resign over pay scandal

WOLFOWITZ

WASHINGTON—WORLD BANK president Paul Wolfowitz angrily accused a weekend of meetings of global financial policymakers that it will unduly intense pressure to quit over a favoritism scandal.

Wolfowitz on Sunday refused to resign as the development lender's president, given reports he retired their "great comrade" over wrapping pay hikes and guarantees promotions he secured for his girlfriend at the bank.

But the 300-member bank's international policymakers representing split on his fate, with the former Pentagon deputy chief continuing to enjoy strong backing from the US administration.

"The current situation is of great concern to all of us," finance and aid ministers from the United States, Europe and other members said in a statement after the bank's spring meeting here.

"We have no reason that the bank can effectively carry out its mandate without uncertainty and any real opposition as well as the motivation of the staff," they said.

The ministers said they would await the findings of a review by the World Bank's executive board into the conduct of Wolfowitz, who denied that his Libyan-born partner, Shaha Riza, got a pay deal worth nearly $200,000.

World critic, one of the driving forces behind the row as long, echoed that the board should be allowed to complete its work.

But he also stressed his determination to continue the global lender's work on improving the plight of the poorest nations, especially in Africa, where he also enjoys backing.

"This is important work and I intend to continue it," Wolfowitz told reporters conference at the end of a weekend of meetings of the bank, the International Monetary Fund and the Group of Seven (G7) rich nations.

Riddle faces more duress as Europe's governments revised their long-held responses of World Bank's "announcement" policy weakness as deputy to former defense secretary Donald Rumsfeld before coming to the bank in 2005.

"It was important to lay down the law. And the fact that the [bank] of Swiss itself accepted a resignation, the message," German development minister Heidemarie Wieczorek-Zeul told reporters.

No mention in the the World Bank loses by its moral authority and its credibility," she said.

At the press conference, Wolfowitz was grilled on whether his credibility is now in tatters at a time when the World Bank is urging to raise up to $25 billion in new funds from its donors to

In 2005 his boss, the bid to attack such risks is available. 1.9 million emerge were filed with the primary taxpayer's using an individual taxpayer number, known as ITIN, up 30 percent from 2006.

Applications for the number spiked last year, with 1.5 million new fists issued through the beginning of November, more than are full year since the program started.

NYT

In US, rise in tax returns from illegal immigrants

WITH THE IRS DEADLINE approaching, illegal immigrants are sending in federal returns to what appear to be record numbers despite fears heightened by recent immigration raids across the country.

The increase in filings comes amid a debate in Congress and in the presidential race about the role of immigrants drawing up at tax preparation offices around the country say they hope filing a return will create a paper trail that could lead to citizenship one day.

In Raleigh, NC, a tax preparer found 50 immigrants came to his office in 7 a.m., including one pregnant woman who had $14,000 in cash in her trunk. In Baltimore, a community agency offering free tax help that was deserted the day after 60 people were crowded up in morning since 6 a.m. Even at the city's two crowded again within 24 hours.

And in Philadelphia in Queens, NY, did record business among illegal immigrants like Jessica Quisilo Lima, who first visited a tax preparation shop shortly after the birth of her daughter, Jennifer three years ago, but was eager to join the fold of US taxpayers last week.

Illegal immigrants do not have Social Security numbers, but the Internal Revenue Service allows them to file taxes by assigning applicants individual taxpayer identification numbers. The numbers were introduced in 1996 to encourage noncitizens with US income, including foreign investors, to file returns. It is generally accepted that most of the 11 million residents issued since then have gone to illegitimate

Vatican to attend Holocaust memorial

JERUSALEM—THE VATICAN'S ambassador to Israel on Sunday agreed to attend a Holocaust memorial ceremony in the Yad Vashem museum, reversing an earlier decision to boycott the event that threatened to upset fragile relations between Israel and the Vatican.

The two established diplomatic relations in 1993, after hundreds of years of painful relations between Catholicism and Judaism. Though ties have warmed considerably in recent years, many sensitive issues remain unresolved, including the Vatican's actions during the Nazi genocide.

Hundreds of people, including Holocaust survivors, sat in rows at the central plaza at Yad Vashem for the ceremony. Survivors wearing blue and white uniforms and civil servants, a youth choir sang, and Israeli leaders addressed the somber gathering.

Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert noted that Israel celebrates its 59th independence day next week. "The renewal of the Jewish people, re-thinking off the ashes of the Holocaust for a new life and national rebirth in its historic birthplace, is the fundamental of an victory," he said.

The ceremony marked the official beginning of Israel's season of Holocaust remembrance Days. It is usually attended by the nation's leaders and by foreign dignitaries. The day, which commemorates the 6 million Jews killed by the Nazis during World War II, is observed from sundown Sunday to sundown Monday, with ceremonies, somber music on the radio and televised documentaries and movies on national television.

AP

Mysterious illness at girls' school

CHAOS, MEXICO—THE TEENage girls fell like dolls as a priest meeting on their Catholic boarding school. Their bones buckling with every step. Six months, a mysterious illness had swept through their school, affecting hundreds of girls, and they were there to ask for answers.

The first noticed cases of the illness, which affected the girls' walking, made them weak, dizzy and nauseated, appeared in November and December. After the girls came back from Christmas break, the illness spread. By February, the schools' director, Sister Magda Cheung, had become alarmed and alerted the authorities.

At the Wednesday press meeting, Sister Michaela Shin looked worried. The girls coughed and shouted in her unpracticed Spanish-accented. It was the story of a boy who lives to get attention.

What may be happening here is far more complex. After further research, Sister Shin and the doctors from the Ghana, that has struck over of the 3,648 girls at this church-run school is psychological.

Mass psychogenic illness, another term you'll hear, is the spread of symptoms from mind to mind. Often it occurs in times of stress

The WORLD

Editor Lawrence B. Casiraya

HIGH AND MIGHTY
Monet Dejnaisan sits at the top of the Democracy Monument in Bangkok on April 11 during a protest to demand that Thai Buddhism be made the national religion of Thailand. AFP/File

Japan directed sex slavery, new documents disclose

TOKYO—A HISTORIAN SAID MONDAY THAT newly discovered documents from post-World War II trials of Japanese war criminals offer fresh proof the military directly forced Asian women into sexual slavery.

The findings will likely cause a stir in conservative Prime Minister Shinzo Abe last month spoiled controversy by saying there was no proof the imperial army directly coerced so-called "comfort women."

Hirofumi Hayashi, a professor of history at Kyoto Sangyo University, said he found seven documents while combing through the massive storehouse of documents submitted during the 1946-1948 "Tokyo Trials" of war criminals.

One document, written by Dutch prosecutors and dated March 23, 1946, quoted a Japanese civilian employee of the Japanese army who said an officer made local women in occupied Borneo stand naked and slapped them to tell them.

"We detained them under orders of the chief security officer to find women to put them into brothels," the employee was quoted as saying.

Another document also includes testimony by a Japanese lieutenant, who said the girls forced women into sexual slavery on Indonesia's Moa island, he said.

"The document shows that he [he added that the men] found local girls into brothels," he told reporters.

"It was true it was to entertain the local villagers who did not like the Japanese army," he said. "The army killed the villagers and put out of their daughters into brothels."

"It was one of the ways agreed to by the generals that she work as a brothel, while the others as forced" but were forced, he said.

Historians believe up to 200,000 women served in brothels for Japanese troops across Asia by the end of the war.

The ruling sent last month when he said that no documents showed Japan "directly" enslaved women, such as by kidnapping them.

However, Abe has repeatedly said that Japan sees responsibilities, a broader sense and that he stood behind a landmark 1993 apology to women comfort women.

Some conservative activists argue that evidence of direct involvement comes from the wartime side.

But Hayashi's documents take added significance as they were officially submitted during the Tokyo Trials, whose validity Japan accepted in the San Francisco treaty under which it regained sovereignty from US occupation in 1952.

Hayashi, the chief researcher of the Center for Research and Documentation on Japan's Past Responsibility, plans to present his documents to the public on Tuesday.

He will hold a press conference at Foreign Correspondents' Club of Japan in Tokyo's Marunouchi district.

Yoshimi, a professor at Fukuoka Chuo University, earlier discovered documents that showed the Japanese military set up "comfort stations" to run down on soldiers, raping local women in occupied China. AFP

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SMART TALK!

WHAT'S INSIDE
■ Massa win tightens up F1 standings/A24

SPORTS
Editor Teodoro S. Matamoros

■ Lakers, Magic reach playoffs /A24

Marquez is Pacquiao's next foe, says Top Rank

Victorious Filipino superstar expected back today

THE CUT under his left eyebrow still hurt, Pacquiao prepares to leave Texas. AFP PHOTO

By Ray Leaño

HOUSTON, TEXAS—HIS WISH has been granted.

Hours after defending his WBC International super featherweight crown in two-day (Sunday to Monday) Manny Pacquiao insisted word that he would face Juan Manuel Marquez for the bigger WBC title in the middle of September.

Pacquiao wants Marquez to be his next opponent because he has a score to settle with the Mexican, who survived three first round knockdowns and managed to escape with a draw in their first meeting on May 8, 2004 in Las Vegas.

"Mahirap ito—pero makakaharap ko 'yan (It's hard to fight him)," Pacquiao told Filipino sportswriters over the phone at the airport here.

Pacquiao, who left for Manila from Los Angeles Sunday evening, was reacting to a report that Top Rank was able to work out a deal for the second Marquez fight moments after he knocked out Mexican challenger Jorge Solis in the fifth round at the Arena Coliseum in San Antonio, Texas.

Top Rank's Ricardo Jimenez offered the international feed being piped to metro Pacquiao's next opponent following the Mario Alberto Siqueiros card at the Auditorio Benito Juarez.

Barrera also being considered

After the controversial draw against Pacquiao, Marquez (49 fights, 36 wins, 11 losses, two draws, one NC), super featherweight title foes Marco Antonio Barrera last March 4 in Las Vegas.

Barrera, who was also booked by Pacquiao in their first meeting in San Antonio on Nov. 20, 2003, is among those being considered by Top Rank and Pacquiao club Sarangani to be the Filipino ring superstar's next opponent.

The others in Arum's short list are Humberto Soto and Juan Diaz now.

Soto has been paired with Manny's younger brother, Bobby, on June 9 in New York City.

The bout, as confirmed to the Miguel Cotto-Zab Judah welterweight showdown at the Madison Square Garden, will be confirmed during a press conference on Tuesday in New York.

Pacquiao said he is willing to face anybody in the division.

"Kahit sino mauna pasuko (Anybody will do)," said Manny. "Wer mir gann to a Mexipot (Am I gentle Marquez)."

The only hitch, it seems, is the fee that Marquez fights under Oscar De La Hoya's Golden Boy Promotions, which is engaged in a legal battle with Top Rank for the promotional rights to Pacquiao.

Chot profuse with praise for nationals

By Manong R. Cuerdo

THE GRACE SELECTION OF MILLWARDS (SA supporters making up the 10th team to connect twice two-weeks) swept the United States Sunday night, with result Chot Reyes happy of having met his objectives.

And with three months to go before the Olympic Asian in Yokohama, Japan, the national of manner believes that the Philippine Five is progressing right on schedule.

"On a scale of 1-10, I'd say we're at about a [illegible]

Exciting twinbill kicks off PBL Unity Cup today

FOUR TEAMS EXPECTED TO PROBE HEIGHT. by figure in the championship race will take the spotlight when the PBL Unity Cup gets underway at the Ultrazone Sports Center in Pasig today.

Cebuana Lhuillier Pure Gold, one of the top bowlers in the season-ending conference, tops the media affair as reassigned backstopped Magnolia squad in the main game at 4 p.m.

Ranked three-caller taken on Burger King, formerly Mail & More, at the 2 p.m. curtain-raiser.

A simple opening ceremony where Harbour Centre Philippines will be honored following its successful title run in the Asoka Champions Cup in Jakarta, Indonesia, over the weekend precedes the inaugural action.

Basketball godfather and Harbour Centre team owner Mikee Romero, the coaching staff led by Jimmy Bacud and all 12 players honored by Toyota Balintawak star point guard Mike Cruz will be presented homework by the hospital led by coach-statesman Chito Victolero and their Gil Arabia.

The nationals roam of the homecomers, 45-65, in the championship game last Saturday to clinch for the Philippines its first international title following the lifting of the Filo-supremacy last February.

Defending champion Barbecue Centre, Toyota Balintawak and Clear Sang Bunk drew opening day byes.

Keeping the core of the team that reached the quarterfinals of the Silver Conference, the Mountain Suns have been installed among the favorites to upset Harbour's bid for a new crown in survey.

Ken Bono, Most Valuable Player of the last OSAP basketball season, will again lead Cebuana Lhuillier's campaign, with the Aussie duo of Brady Lockhart and Doug Herlaney and Erik dela Cuesta expected to provide major support.

But not to challenge them outright are the beverage Masters, who extends a formidable unit despite the decision of Ian Bolde's championship core to temporarily rest in to with the team.

Also expected to be leading their Filipino trio are Fue Saneng, 7 Andersons Jeff Chan and Jason Villanueva, University of the East star Reuben Guttabuan and veteran Al Magpayo.

Georgina Evans will spark Herbal Sun's campaign after injuries forced the 6-foot-9 center to miss several games last summer. His counterpart match up with Burger King franchise player Jo Quinabo is expected to collide also in the game.

Harbour-RP five proves worth

By Jeanine M. Pays

BRUMFIA—COACH LOMEL BACALLA HAILED Herbalsun's role as an underdog.

"I announced on that I didn't deem it necessary might rule-off our theory," he said. "I sign in 4 a.m. Lonely had two hours of sleep. I was thinking about the game."

Alike evasion, though, was gone hours before Harbour Centre Philippines played Santa Maria Mission Indonesia in the championship match of the Southeast Asian Basketball Association (Seaba) Championship (sp).

"Starting the warm-ups, I saw the heart and desire of the players," said Bacalla. "We could see it in their eyes. Nobody was joking, nobody was talking to the opponent."

Harbour Centre owner and team founder Mikee Romero also took time to interact the coach at hotel with his crew.

"We had a full session before the game," said Mailers. "My only question was, 'how will we want for the recovery?' I wanna see game schemes to speak and then all goes their commitment to play their best as one can bring home the trophy."

Bacalla also felt little need to review the game plan.

"Because I coach it," said Bacalla. "I only gave them a pep talk, that after that I just told them to enjoy the game."

With rivalry point guard Gilbert Cruz and import Julius Pinson leading the way, the nationals rose to an 80-67 win-victory over the stunned Indonesian team Saturday night.

JC Intal, Jonathan Fernandez and Ryan Arabe also played key roles as Coach Lomel Bacalla's Filipinos edged out the nippers of 6'3" Orlando treble from Intal in the finalization.

"Our scouting was a very big factor," said Bacalla. "In the first game, we knew little about them. But we were able to collect the adjustments after that. We took one step backward, but made two steps forward."

Bacalla added that the coaching staff's confidence in the young PBL reference did not waver.

With the victory, the Philippines earned a berth in the Fiba-Asia Championship Cup in Tehran, Iran, in May where the country will be represented by the PBA-backed national crew under coach Chot Reyes.

Chot profuse with praise for Nationals

Pinoypages A2 >

A scrutiny of having competition exactly for the Fiba-Asia is concerned," Reyes said this season over the phone yesterday.

"Confidentials are have a long way to go, considering that we started practice only March 12," he added. "But this is as an premium line-ups."

The champion dethroners could not hide his appreciation of how the team worked truly hard during camp. He said the team achieved what it travelled for.... skills training, conditioning and the chemistry to play against top-caliber competition.

"They were very good," said Reyes. "Everyone really showed up in work... there work-ethic and attitude were exemplary. And aside no mistake about it, the camp had a killer schedule."

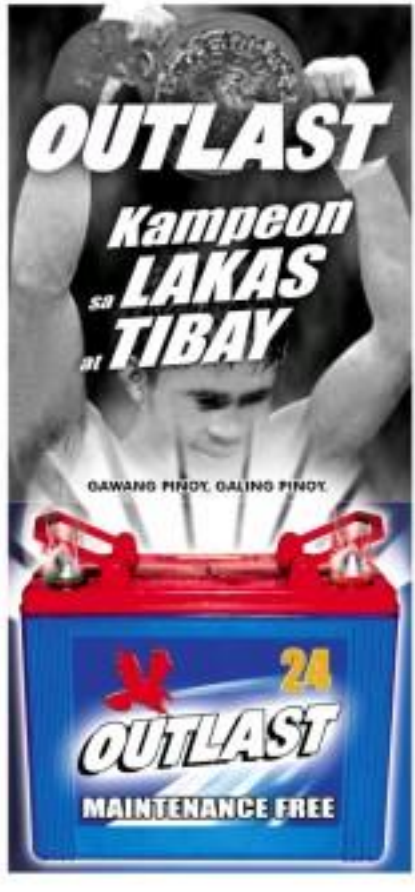
The nationals members — led Yeshua, Jimmy Alapag, Ren-Ren Ritualo, Rainier Alcantara, Mark Dennis, Tony dela Cruz, Gordon Herrera, Jay-Jay Helterbrand, Danny Seigle, Kerby Raymundo and Mark Cardona — will all join PBA All-Star activities at San Fernando and Reyes-now needs before going back to work.

Incidentally, Reyes sometime clarified that the task of returning to the Olympics would depend on a strong showing in japan—no less than second place in Fiba-Asia meet-ups.

The Fiba-Asia is the qualifier for the Beijing 2008 Games and the hosts automatic that goes there other than China should either win the Japan tournament or retaining second to the Chinese.

China, hailing the host, already has an automatic slot, and the only remaining spot will be decided in Tehrantown.

So even if China, by some design, finishes out of the running only the champion will go to the Games.



3 Pinoy grandmasters stalk RP Open leaders

Standings after five rounds: 4 points—1. Yu Yao (China), 2. Wei Yi (China), 3. Ding Liren (China), 4. Wei Zhong (China), 5. Shen Zhihao (China), 6. Ni Hua (China), 7. Wang Yue (China), 8. Xiu Deshun (China), 9. Zhou Jianchao (China), 10. Li Chao (China), 11. Bu Xiangzhi (China), 12. Ding Liren (China), 13. Wang Hao (China), 14. Li Shilong (China), 15. Wang Yue (China), 16. Li Chao (China), 17. Bu Xiangzhi (China), 18. Ding Liren (China), 19. Wang Hao (China), 20. Li Shilong (China), 21. Wang Yue (China), 22. Li Chao (China), 23. Bu Xiangzhi (China), 24. Ding Liren (China), 25. Wang Hao (China), 26. Li Shilong (China), 27. Wang Yue (China), 28. Li Chao (China), 29. Bu Xiangzhi (China), 30. Ding Liren (China), 31. Wang Hao (China), 32. Li Shilong (China), 33. Wang Yue (China), 34. Li Chao (China), 35. Bu Xiangzhi (China), 36. Ding Liren (China), 37. Wang Hao (China), 38. Li Shilong (China), 39. Wang Yue (China), 40. Li Chao (China), 41. Bu Xiangzhi (China), 42. Ding Liren (China), 43. 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Soguilon bests old century dash mark

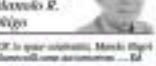
By Marc Anthony Reyes

SOGUILON: 2nd RP record

"I'm very happy because it means I'm improving," Soguilon said after bagging the bronze in the meet.

The 20-year-old 5'6" 52-kilogram had earlier erased the 2006 meet record of Andre del Prado in an-nounce in the 100. His mean of 11.39 seconds beat Del Prado's old mark of 11.44 set in 1984.

Clean Living



Manolo P. Dayo

DOP, to your convenience, Manolo digest column@mail.com.ph ..... Ed

Sportswatch

Liberica Invt'l golf slated April 20-21 at Malarayat

A HYBRID ACHIEVABLE IS THE MAIN RIPPLE UPON in the 2007 Liberica Invt'l invitational, the one-two guest tournament of the Mount Malarayat Golf and Country Club Inc. (pa. City vicinity) 20-21. Gerald Rodriguez and Raymond Sangil are the defending overall champions. The Liberica organizing committee headed by Ophir Cruz, vice president for marketing of Liberica Ricefields Inc., at 12 -001 golf cart, included Belen Hills, a unit of Mitsui Home and at Club Malarayat Golf. The event's major sponsors include Active Group Inc., PNB Beneficial Life Insurance, The Tan Company, EDTC Inc., Lourdes Mendoza, Dang Electrical, Asia Interior Manufacturer, Smallcorp, Pagcor, Mitsumi Marine Corp., Shell Philippines, Ayala Corporation, Manila Water Co. Inc., Bank of the Philippine Islands, Manila Electric Co., Metrobank Card Corp., Bank of Commerce, Philippine Long Distance Telephone Company, Mercantile Insurance Co. Inc., Insular Life Assurance Co. Ltd. and Mitsumi Electronics Corp. For inquiries, call the club at 043-756-1001.

Derby Who's Who collide in NCA coolfest today

THE COOLEST PETS FINEST EQUESTRIANS AND BEST OF THE GOLF SET ON THE MAT ON. All-Filipino Invitational Derby at the Polo City cockpit. The derby, hosted by the newly

Government Warning:
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Lakers, Magic reach playoffs

LOS ANGELES—KOBE BRYANT SCORED 50 points and Los Angeles beat Seattle, 109-98, to clinch a playoff berth in the NBA Sunday.

Orlando also clinched its first berth at least since Grip capping Boston, 88-86, as Dwight Howard blocked Delonte West's layup on the buzzer.

With Indiana taking a 113-109 loss to Memphis, the Magic secured the the final spot in the Eastern Conference playoffs.

The Lakers will finish seventh or eighth in the Western Conference and face either Dallas or Phoenix in the first round.

Bryant scored 50 or more for the 13th time this season, the third-highest total in NBA history behind Wilt Chamberlain's 61 times in 1961-62, and 30 times the following season.

The Los Angeles Clippers' 105-100 loss to Sacramento meant the Lakers had only to win one of their last two games to make the playoffs.

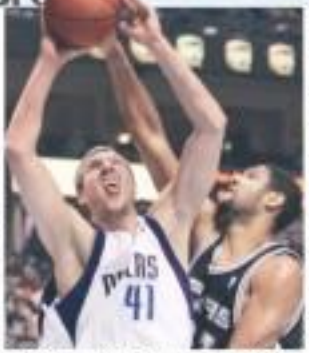
Teams coached by Phil Jackson have made the playoffs 17 years in a row.

In other games, it was Dallas 95, San Antonio 86; Golden State 123, Minnesota 106; Sacramento 105, LA Clippers 100; Chicago 105, Washington 98; Toronto 107, New York 100; Philadelphia 110, Detroit 91.

The Mavericks beat the Spurs at home in a must-game that saw Gordon Ryng, resistance overturning, and Tim Duncan getting ejected.

The Spurs' loss—which ended their six-game winning streak—broke them into the No. 3 seed in the Western Conference.

Jason Terry(24) and Devin Harris each scored 21 points. They were for the sixth time tying the 1990-91 Milwaukee Bucks for most-ever in league history. They were 36-1 at home. AP



MAVERICKS' rowser at power Dirk Nowitzki puts up a shot off Spurs rival Tim Duncan during the latter's teams' emotional match. AP/AFP

Massa win tightens up F1 standings

MASSA / Exciting

SAKHIR, BAHRAIN—Three wins, three 48 hours winners and a three-way tie in the drivers' standings.

It can't get any richer, as is Formula One now that Michael Schumacher's gone.

After The Bahrain Grand Prix on Sunday, Ferrari's Felipe Massa, on Fernando Alonso, Schumacher's replacement Nico Hulkenberg, and Renault's Lewis Hamilton all have 22 points.

Felipe Massa, the winner Sunday, has 17.

"The season is really exciting," Alonso said after driving his Renault to a third career victory. "The championship is very tight and the Ferraris and McLarens are very close together."

McLaren's Alonso and Ferrari's Raikkonen are technically ahead, with each having a victory. Raikkonen won the first race of the season, the Australian GP. Here Alonso won in Malaysia last week but placed just fifth in the Bahrain GP.

"We came away with (only) four points and still lead the championship," Alonso said.

Barnes up in his McLaren on Sunday, Hamilton became the first driver in F1 history to place in the top three in his first three races.

"I think it is a fantastic achievement," Hamilton said. "I am extremely proud."

Raikkonen was third in Jeddah.

"Everybody is very close to one another, so it's going to be a difficult season," the Finn said.

After 24 laps, Massa led by about a second over Hamilton, and Alonso was holding off Raikkonen.

There were no changes among the top eight until the first pit stops but by lap 25 Massa increased his lead to an enviable over Hamilton, and Raikkonen had taken over third from Alonso. AP

NBC NAT'L CUP

Pacman inspires GenSan five

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—INSPIRED BY THEIR team's record-breaking victory over Mexican Jorge Solis at noontime, MP Pacquiao Gerflash's cagers rolled back the Toyota-Bolo Phantom quint, 93-82, to get back in the winning road in the 2007 NBC National Cup basketball tournament at the Cagayan gymnasium.

Trailing from the start, the boss of world champion Manny Pacquiao exploded in the playoff period to score their second win in six games.

Jay Fernandez had a double-double performance (27 points and 16 rebounds) as he combined with Rolly Mesias for 35 points in pulling Gerflash to its first win after two straight losses.

Mesias finished with 21 points and 17 boards.

Defending back-to-back champion Gerflash initially trailed in defeat today against the dangerous Mexico Golden Harvest at the Mexico gym in Bulacan. Gametime is 7 p.m.

Cebu squads battle separate MVBA foes

CEBU CITY—THE TWO CEBU-BASED TEAMS take on separate opponents in the Visayas Inaugural Basketball Association (MVBA) First Conference tournament today at the Sinsa Cebu City Coliseum.

The Elgin Ambrosio of coach Mike Dayao take the floor against the St. Charles Knights Pueblo Evo of coach Paul "Yayoy" Ramirez in the first game at 2 p.m. with the Arthur Alcoba defenders of coach Al Vicente tackling Holcim Pepsi/Naresa Alkaline at 4 p.m. Both being fixed in the second game at 4:30.

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BUSINESS

Editor Raul G. Maravilla ● Assistant Editor Carmela S. Reyes

OFW remittances up 25% to $1.1B in Feb.

ECONOMIC Planning Secretary Ronaldo Mercado is the beneficiary of a quiet career in Philanthropy while waiting for President Macapagal-Arroyo prior to a roundtable discussion on the OFW's homecoming on the Philippine economy

Two-month total inflows soared by 22% to $2.2B

By Michelle V. Rosca

REMITTANCES SENT BY OVERSEAS FILIPINO WORKERS (OFWs) through banks surged by 25.4 percent to $1.1 billion in February from a year ago, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas reported yesterday.

This brought total remittances for the first two months of the year to $2.2 billion, up 22.6 percent from the same period last year.

"The robust growth of remittances was achieved mainly on the back of banks' aggressive network, as well as enhanced and effective R...financial services to OFWs," the BSP said in a statement.

The central bank also said that demand for higher-skilled, then higher-paid, Filipino workers also contributed to the increase in the remittances sent by OFWs to their families in the Philippines.

Domestic helpers, construction workers and other lower-income workers used to comprise the bulk of OFWs. But this group started to...the increased demand for higher-skilled Filipino workers such as medical practitioners resulted in the rise in the value of remittance inflows.

(BW) B1

91-day treasury bill rate inches up to 2.952%

THE BELEPTIDE PI-DAY TREASURY bill rate, after hitting all-time lows, increased its downward trend and inched up to 2.952 percent in yesterday's government securities auction.

The new rate for the 91-day bills, the benchmark used by banks in pricing loans, was higher by 0.2 basis points from the 2.6 percent recorded during the last auction prior to the Lenten break.

The yield of the 182-day bills increase by 0.1 basis points to 3.56 percent from 3.549 percent.

The government yesterday scrapped the scheduled auction for the 365-day bills, saying market behavior showed lack of investor interest in the one-year government securities.

Despite the slight increase in the rates for the short- and six-month bills, the Bureau of the Treasury said it did not mean that the appetite for government securities was weakening.

National Treasurer Omin Gon said demand for treasury bills remained strong as evidenced by the investment grade of the government's debt offering.

Bids for the 91-day bills hit P9.99 billion, higher than the government's offering of only P2.8 billion. On the other hand, tenders for the 182-day debt instruments reached P5.21 billion, higher than the debt offering of only P3.12 billion.

The Treasury's auction committee accepted P3.4 billion worth of tenders for the 91-day bills and P1.4 billion for the 182-day securities.

Some analysts said the moderate increase in Treasury bill rates was a re-

(BW) B1

Currencies

PESO-DOLLAR RATE

P47.60 = $1

as of 5 p.m. April 16, 2007

Stock Market

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX

Complete market report on Page B2

Stocks rise 1.58%

SHARE PRICES CLOSED 1.58 percent higher yesterday on a bullish rebound, snapping a three-day decline, with gains in most blue-chip stocks helping by heavy institutional investor...

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TOYOTA moving forward

Anscor investing $20M in tourism, healthcare projects this year

By Elizabeth Sandoz-Lacson

LISTED FIRM A. SORIANO CORP. (Anscor) is making a large bet on the booming services and tourism sector as it plans to invest $20 million (almost P1 billion) this year in healthcare, nursing education and a new system for hotel reservations.

Anscor chair and president Andres Soriano III said the investments would be funded by proceeds from Anscor's sale of its stake in port operator International Container Terminal Services Inc. and SPI Technologies.

"We've bullish on the Filipinos and helping them expand their knowledge base," Soriano said.

Any proceeds from the sale of Anscor's stake in ICTSI to the Razon group of ICTSI was P5.67 billion with net gains placed at P3.03 billion. The sale of SPI to e-PLDT was valued at P640 million. Net gains realized from the sale was P435.3 million.

"In 2006, Philippine economic growth remained resilient at 5.4 percent, driven by the services sector's robust performance on the back of consistent demand for information technology-enabled call centers, medical transcription and software development, double-digit export growth and record high remittances from overseas Filipino workers," Soriano said in a statement.

He said that to capitalize on this growth momentum, Philippine businesses must build a stronger base of human talent and offer education and training to enhance the country's resources of the country's industries.

As part of this vision, Soriano said that Anscor plans to buy a majority stake in a hospital and a nursing school based in the Visayas to ensure that its 60-percent manpower services unit, International Health Management Associates Inc. (IHMAI), has access to qualified nurses for careers in the United States.

Soriano said that an estimated 8 to 10 percent of total nursing posts in US hospitals are currently vacant with the US Bureau of Labor and Statistics predicting that the country will need an additional 1.2 million nurses by 2014.

IHMAI deployed 164 nurses last year to various hospitals in the United States, up from 128 in 2005.

Anscor earlier disclosed that it would enter into negotiation for a possible investment in Bacolod-based Riverside Medical Center and Riverside College, also in Bacolod. Interest was expressed to the same founders of Book International, Inc. Pablo Daza.

When asked to confirm the identities of Anscor's target acquisitions in Clark fields, Soriano declined to comment, citing confidentiality agreements with the parties involved.

Anscor is also reporting to close a deal with United Kingdom-registered booking system operator Resdo Ltd. in the next few days for a 10-percent stake in the company for roughly $600,000.

"It basically takes the load off small hotel operators for numbering and running their own reservations," Soriano said.

Anscor owns/owns boat Beach and Leisure Inc., which in turn owns the Annapolis Resort in Pulupuit, recognized annually since its opening in 1994 as one of the best beach resorts in the world. In 2006, Annapolis Resort registered an occupancy rate of 53.6 percent from 42.5 percent the previous year. Revenues grew 21 percent to P417 million, buoyed by the growth in the country's tourist arrivals.

Gold nears $700 an ounce

MR. BEARBULL

Ben Nathan

FOR YEARS, I HAVE IMAGINED myself as a perfect gentleman, kind to animals, courteous to women, and helpful to readers and subscribers. I do not drink, smoke, take drugs, eat meat or do anything dishonest. I am not perfect. At the age of 3, I was charged with a misdemeanor for pushing my tricycle in a no-pushing zone but in I could not stand, the case was dismissed. Nevertheless, I have a guilty conscience that I can no longer contain within myself. I have told the priest, doctor, psychiatrist and all my friends. But it is not enough and I must take this opportunity to make it public.

I AM THE FATHER OF ANNA NICOLE SMITH'S BABY!

Now that I have confessed, can I manage the $462-million Trust Fund and collect the's postum unusual fee?

My wife was explaining to my almost 14-year-old daughter that she was already beginning to develop. "In a year or so, you will be having your period(s)," I hope they are Playboy and Penthouse.

A man calls his doctor and says breathlessly, "Doctor, I think my wife is dead." The doctor replies, "What do you mean you think she's dead?" "Well, doctor," says the man, "she says she is the same but she thinks she is."

There is not a great deal to write about this week as the country's new year starts in earnest this week. Investors have accepted that increases in earnings may fall from double digit to high single-digit growth this time around. Even so, it is not good news for the market, which looks as if will move sideways for the next few months.

BERNANKE IS HELPFUL according to economists. This means that with inflation still a most worrying problem than slowing growth, it is conceivable that the FED might increase rates before declining them. The number of jobs created last month was much unexpected at 180,000, about twice the consensus. The unemployment rate fell to 4.4 percent, the lowest in 5 years, and this is with 11 million illegal immigrants.

Still, Bernie stumped after the FED said that interest rates might have to rise to curb inflation even in the economy shows signs of slowing. "Higher interest rates could exacerbate the slowdown in the United States and that could affect exporting countries because it is still the key consumer market." Minutes from the FED indicated that more rate increases might be on their way if inflation should persist.

Further policy flexing may be necessary to foster lower inflation. The combination of weaker than expected economic indicators and somewhat high readings on inflation suggested to several downside risks to economic growth and greater uncertainty that the expected gradual decline in core inflation would materialize.

"If the situation in the US economy worsens, we could see an impact on exports and remittances. An increase in interest rates could siphon away liquidity from equities. The central bank might buy dollars to boost its international reserves and help curb gains in the peso," said Governor Tetangco. "If the economy experiences inflation and the currency would have enough room and the central bank not intervened to smooth out fluctuations." The peso is trading below 48.

PACIFIC ONLINE was such a chip BPO that it was obvious that it would open high up. There have been tremendous interest in National Reinsurance and in the IPO was only worth P2.5 billion at P5.80 a share, the underwriters. BDO rightly confined it to local investors. It should open at a 20-30 percent premium as their company has a good growth record and pays out all its profits as dividend.

The IMF raised its first quarter target by P6.88 billion, producing P46 billion instead of P46.88 billion. This is not loose because tax revenues for 70 percent of the government's revenues.

The IMF said that the economies of China and India might cool as interest rates rise in these two fastest growing economies. South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Singapore will probably also slow as strong growth in the United States dampens demand for exports. Asia's emerging markets will slow from 9.9 percent in 2006 to 8.4 percent in 2007. Electronic goods would be the most affected. The IMF predicts a growth would decline from 5.4 percent this year to 4.9 percent in 2008.

ATLAS, which started shipping lat ores ores to China, plans to increase its shipments from 45,000 tons in February to 150,000 tons in March from its mine in Cagua. By December, AT will also be producing copper and gold from its P300,000-ton Toledo mine. I recommend this stock to the speculator and the buyers at P11 on a chart breakout; it is now P15 but we expect it to reach P22.50 in a year. The conversion of the debt to equity should be completed in about 2 weeks.

GOLD today broke the P1 strong psychological resistance level on the day that Jerry Angping returned from his 2-week vacation in the United States. IMP is due to run on April 24 and 3-days later their will be a 2-for-1 stock split. Buy IMP at P1 for payment in 2 months (March) and P1 more (April) for delivery in May. Sell IMP at P2 and buy back at P1.50 for a profit of 50 centavos. Repeat the process.

PHELPS was in P3 on heavy foreign buying. The mine producers copper and gold, both in demand. APX also rose on foreign buying. I would recommend this stock to the speculator and the buyers at P11 on a chart breakout; it is now P15 but we expect it to reach P22.50 in a year. The conversion of the debt to equity should be completed in about 2 weeks.

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PHELPS was in P3 on heavy foreign buying. The mine producers copper and gold, both in demand. APX also rose on foreign buyers. There is no doubt in my mind that this is the year of the mining stocks.

rerbarbull@yahoo.com

OFW remittances...

From page B-1

During the forums from the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA), the BSP said the number of Filipinos deployed for work abroad actually decline by 12.1 percent to the first two months of the year to 170,872.

But the recent bank said the drop in deployment did not affect growth in remittances because more higher-paying jobs were becoming available in the country.

The BSP also said that in the past, more OFWs were sending their remittances through informal channels such as money-transfer agents not registered with the BSP, thus some dollar inflows remained unrecorded by the government's database.

Enhanced products and services have also led to recent years—such as phone and Internet banking, lower service charges and the establishment of more remittance centers abroad—encouraged OFWs to send remittances through banks, the BSP said.

The growing dollar remittances are considered a major contributor to the country's economic growth. Government economists explained that the higher remittances have an increase in consumption by OFW families, boosting growth in the country's gross domestic product.

The increase in dollar inflows is also cited as a major reason for the appreciation of the peso to more than 48 to the dollar, the strongest level to the peso in more than 10 years.

The BSP said the United States, the United Kingdom, Italy, Saudi Arabia, the United Emirates, Japan, Hong Kong and Singapore remained as the major sources of OFW remittances.

91-day T-bill rate inches up ...

From page B-1

version following the falling of interest rates to historically low levels. Others said the increase in the rates was due to the slightly higher premium sought by the market to cover for risks brought by the coming elections.

Cyrus said the decision to cancel the auction for the one-year bills was due to investor preference for shorter-dated instruments as they secure themselves from the uncertainty of the economic environment resulting from next month's elections.

Should the post-election business environment be less rosy than the current one, investors could easily get rid of investments back with a shorter-dated investment. —Michelle U. Ayroso

Stocks rise 1.58%

From page B-1

This trading volume, however, suggest that many investors are choosing to stay on the sidelines awaiting fiscal bonds, they said.

The composite index added 30.79 points to 3,267.86. The broader all share index gained 23 points to 2,894.61. Gainers beat losers 64 to 26, while 62 ended unchanged.

A total of 3.7 billion shares worth P3.4 billion changed hands.

"The market was initially trading sideways but found its support at the 3,200 level, bouncing back from last week's lulls," said Rommel Macapagal of Woodlock Global Equities.

He said investors clustered their funds into the equities market given prevailing low interest rates.

"There is a lot of liquidity in the market, and investors are looking for more attractive options like stocks," he added.

Cecilia de Leon of Secured Capital Equities said that while several investment was still positive, the light trading volume indicated investors were still looking for bonds and stronger catalysts.

"There has been a lot of activity with recent public offerings, and investors will likely watch out for developments on new prospective offerings before assigning up stocks in huge volumes," he said.

Top-traded Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. or PLDT gained 95 to P2,405. Globe Telecom rose P4.0 to P1,335.

Ayala Corp. climbed P40 to P600 while unit Ayala Land advanced 50 centavos to P17.75.

AFP

DOF braces for tax shortfall in Q1

Low collection in 1st 2 mos seen to drag down quarterly figure

By Doris C. Dumlao

WASHINGTON BUREAU—FINANCE SECRETARY Margarito Teves is bracing for a possible shortfall in government revenues for the first quarter despite some improvement in tax collections for March.

Under the fiscal program approved by the inter-agency Development Budget Coordination Committee, the government was supposed to raise P626.4 billion in revenues in the first three months, while expenditures shall be limited to reach P928.4 billion. The goal was to keep the budget deficit within the cap of P48.0 billion.

"Even if we're able to hit the target in March, I don't think we could recover the (tax) shortfall the first investments," Teves said.

Although the government was able to raise about P2b billion from the recent sale of midwest shares in Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co., Teves said proceeds from this transaction was already factored in when the DBCC drew up the fiscal program.

"So, the key is...the expenditure (level)," Teves said, explaining that, in adjusting the level, the government may set aim its targets.

"I will only know that by Friday," he added.

He said the budget performance for the first quarter would be announced in a press briefing in Manila on Monday.

In terms of total revenues, he said it was uncertain whether the revenue shortfalls of the Bureau of Internal Revenue and Bureau of Customs could be recovered by improved collections for the months of March.

"The likelihood is, because of the shortfall in the first and second months, the performance for March may not be able to [make up for] the shortfall on the tax revenue side," Teves said.

But he said it was likewise uncertain whether the Department of Budget was able to increase its spending in line with the first quarter program.

"The intention was to front-load, but I'm not sure to what extent because, historically, they have also had problems with absorptive capacity," Teves said.

The government has programmed to incur a budget deficit of P48.0 billion in the first quarter—starting up a first's share of its P62.7-billion deficit ceiling for the full year, due to the front loading of infrastructure spending.

The accelerated spending was programmed in the first three months of the year to take advantage of the good weather and to move ahead of a 45-day ban on approving infrastructure projects during the campaign for the mid-terms elections in May.

He said additional proceeds from privatization later this year would allow the government some flexibility to spend on its priority programs while keeping its P62-billion budget deficit goal for the year.

The government is expecting to raise P50 billion from the sale of shares in San Miguel Corp. in the second semester.

For the second quarter which is a tax payment season, the government expects to generate a budget surplus of P1.6 billion before reaching its deficits in the remainder of the year. For the third and fourth quarters, the budget deficit cap was set at P32.7 billion and P9 billion, respectively.

The government was able to slash its budget deficit from P146.3 billion in 2005 to its eight-year low of P62.2 billion in 2006, although this was largely due to severe belt-tightening measures, prompted by Congress' failure to enact a national budget for the year, which forced fiscal managers to operate using the previous year's budget.

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MUSTARD Seed

SME retailers drive up IT spending in Asia-Pacific

By Ronnel W. Domingo

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SPENDING among small and medium-sized retail businesses (SMBs) in the Asia-Pacific region outside Japan are expected to hit $11.4 billion in 2007, with companies based in the Philippines among those driving the trend.

Results of a recent study by New York-based AMI Partners Inc. showed that IT spending among Philippine retail businesses that employ less than a thousand workers—along with those in India, South Korea, Indonesia and Vietnam—would grow in leaps in the region over-average of 11 percent.

Midori Gotо, AMI's research director for Asia-Pacific, said in a report announcing the study's 2nd "The Global Retailer Model" that computing which includes PC and server hardware—and IT services would be the top drivers of SMB spending this year.

Gotо explained that the IT revolution in the retail SMB segment was taking place at two levels in the region—small businesses, or those with less than 100 employees, and medium businesses, or those with workers numbering between 100 and 999.

"Both types of companies would lose the inter-against threats to their business models from larger retailers which would compel them to reinvent themselves using IT as a competitive differentiator," he said.

Gotо added that some 1.54,600 new retail SMBs in the Asia-Pacific region were planning to open up in the next 12 months in 2007 as a means to better manage their business drivers by using simple productivity tools.

Also, many of the current and new retail SMBs are also looking at connecting to the Internet through broadband to do business—especially those customers and responding their reach to their suppliers.

In an earlier AMI study released in May 2006, SMBs in the Philippines were found to spend at least $105 million on IT services last year.

This study called "2006-2008 Philippines Small and Medium Businesses Market Overview and Comprehensive Market Opportunity Assessment," showed that among the 1.82 million small businesses in the country, 22 percent have adopted at least one PC in their business.

Of these, more than 122,000 PC shipments to one looking after these IT solutions, moreover said, instead, have existing employees doubling up to IT support.

The micro-franchise market are about 38 percent of the 8,779 SMBs in the country.

Most of the SMBs have expected to purchase replacing old hardware with newer ones, upgrading operating systems, strengthening their IT security, increasing storage capacity and deploying storage solutions.

"IT service and support vendors in the Philippines should tap into the trend and convert bundled deals with hardware and software vendors to reach out to these SMBs," the 2006 report said.

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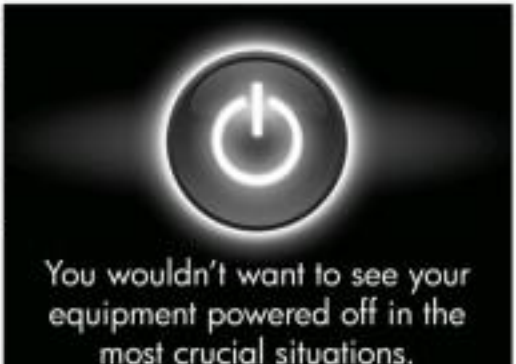

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3 years, 4-hour Response, 9x5	Onsite repair service, 5 days a week, 9 hours a day. Response time: within 4 hours*. Monday - Friday, excluding public holidays, 9am to 5pm
3 years, 4-hour Response, 24x7	Onsite repair service, 7 days a week, 24 hours a day. Response time: within 4 hours*. Monday - Sunday, including public holidays
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** Call Restoration is not available for Asian Countries where government regulations limit HP's ability to export parts.

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Family prude

MEMBERS OF THE CO FAMILY WHO control the billion-peso Assistance Grove Group are reminded the turn-of-millions of peace is "trust fund" time set aside Gonzalo Co.

That's the latest twist in the painful, disturbing family feud over the company that makes the popular Green Cross brand of rubbing alcohol and hydrogen peroxide.

Now in his 80s, Gonzalo is the elder among four brothers and is sister, making up the Board of Directors of Chairman Eli Lino Assistance family in Green Cross.

He told the SEC that his siblings have sub-to control of the business that he had actually set up originally as a single proprietorship called Gonzalo Laboratories.

Then the rest of the family jumped up on him! Or something made like that and so he claimed he should own the company 100 percent.

But the 12 siblings, led by their recognized patriarch Anthony, who seems to be the closest to the "logic," contended that their father Co Ay Tim wanted it all in their children.

Anthony related that his parents named the business after Gonzalo, being the first-born, to run the various among the Chinese-Filipinos in the time.

When the family incorporated the business in 1953, according to Anthony, they had put some 50 percent of the company under Gonzalo's name, because he was the only naturalized Filipino citizen there.

Anthony said Grove Cross, despite having a hard time meeting its loan payments, unfortunately you-up after ousted his for Gonzalo bunch to go into another business on their own under the "Unilac" line of baby products.

In 2006, the rift emerged between the Gonzalo branch and the rest of the Co family when they competed to be the new president.

As a result, Gonzalo opted to sell out of Green Cross which, according to Anthony, was deep in debt and was not doing well. Still, the company kept Gonzalo in the board, giving him a monthly salary.

In the 1990s, Green Cross problems became a hit, thanks to the "hard work" of the third brother Joseph, plus the exercise of business prudence by the rest of the family.

In 2003, Gonzalo wrote Green Cross a letter, saying that he regretted his selling out, and that, in his old age, he had nothing to give to his eight children.

That's when the family set up the "loan fund" for Gonzalo, plus some outright cash "gift."

The family would not divulge the amount. They just said it was "substantial," meaning it was in the tens of millions.

A copy of the trust agreement says the

BREAKTIME

Coronado R. Bascal III

Gonzalo branch had "no claim" against the assets of the family, and it owes title about "benevolence, love and concern" for Grove Inc.—well, on the part of those who stayed with Green Cross.

All of the eight Gonzalo children signed the agreement, namely: Syd Ho Co, Diane Go Sit Co, Pablo Sit Co, Agnes Co Tait, Lucy Co Ong, Cecilia Co Tu, Pelin Sit Co, Antonella Co Pons.

But last December, according to Anthony, one of them demanded that the Co family dissolve the trust agreement and release the funds to the Gonzalo children instead.

When the family turned down the request, according to Anthony, the Gonzalo band filed the complaint with the NBI.

And how will such a painful family feud end?

Anthony just kept quiet. it was a prayer issue. I could see the pain on his face.

Finally, his voice cracking, he said it has be could not say how it would end.

But one thing is clear to Anthony: He said that nobody on his side of the family wants and will ever want to hurt Gonzalo. They still not over the any court case or a counter move to the Game of the Gonzalo branch.

* * *

What is this: I have than the new head of the government first SEO, or the National Printing Office, called private printing companies to a meeting last April 5?

The meeting was held in Bonifacio Ignacio, whom Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita recommended for the position.

What was supposed to be a getting-to-know-you meeting, according to a source who was present, turned out to be a frustrating activity.

For instead of what that somebody even dropped the names of Mrs. Constitution Mike Arroyo, Pagcor Chair Ephraim Genuino and a certain "Erwin," who is apparently the son of Gemino who is running for a congressional seat representing Makati.

It certain Francisco "Cheo" Jimo Jr., under-secretary of Trade and Industry, company of another printing firm called Printwell, which owned by the family of Joseph Yao, facilitated the meeting.

By coincidence, Printwell earlier was blacklisted by the SEO for illegal activities.

Our sources said that Jimo told the private printers that Agana needed to raise P5 million to facilitate his appointment.

Ater present, according to our source, name Sylvia Sarala (former lawyer of the NPC) who was disinfected), Sen Mon (for new NPC legal consultant who was asked to resign), plus representatives of the private printers.

They were Earnest Printing, Instant Printink, Holy Family, Tone Guide, Mercury Multiplex, Mercury Visayas, Consolidated, Makati Image and Print Time.

Apparently, the group intends to write an open letter of complaint to Ebreo.

(ad/ra)

* * *

According to the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, due to the appreciation of the peso against the dollar this one administration saved in 2005 about some P1.6 billion in interest payments.

Based on preliminary figures from the central bank, the peso appreciation again resulted in interest savings for the government that year, amounting to about P1.2 billion.

But...

Tell you what...expect the Palace to hammer these benefits as part of the "economic gains" under this core administration, which is actually the theme of the "Bone Daily-renamed campaign.

You go would you, if you were thirsty to be, wouldn't you?

BOP surplus higher in March

By Michelle V. Rama

Surplus reached $1.4B, up 10% from previous month

THE COUNTRY'S BALANCE OF payments (BOP) position as of end-March hit a higher surplus compared with the previous month's level, as dollar inflows from higher exports, foreign investments and remittances bolstered up the country's foreign currency holdings.

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas yesterday reported that BOP surplus reached $1.411 billion as of end-March, rising by almost 10 percent from the $1.283 billion recorded in February.

On a year-on-year basis however, data from the BSP showed the end-March surplus was a 32-percent decline from the $2.112 billion recorded in the same period last year.

Monetary authorities said there are more foreign currency inflows than outflows.

"Sustained double-digit growth in OFW [overseas Filipino workers] remittances, strong merchandise exports, increased inflows in foreign direct and portfolio investments and front-loading of NG borrowings were behind the BOP surplus in the first quarter of this year," BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. explained.

The country's exports grew by 14.4 percent in the first two months of the year due to higher demand for electronics, in major export product, the National Statistics Office earlier reported.

The government expects exports to grow by 11 percent for in 2007 despite projection of a slowdown in the economies of the US, the Philippines' major export market.

The National Economic and Development Authority said the 11-percent exports growth target was also predicated on global increase in demand for consumer electronics like MP3 players and video phones from other parts of the world.

The national government has completed its foreign borrowing program for the year by borrowing $2 billion in January. The BSP said the government's move to complete its foreign borrowing program early in the year also helped boost the country's BOP position for the first quarter.

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Trade in RP coconut products gets a boost

By Konrad W. Dorrings

GLOBAL DEMAND FOR goods made with natural ingredients, including those used in making drugs, soap and shampoo, drives exports of semi-additional coconut-based products up to about $34.7 million in 2006.

Data from the United Coconut Associations of the Philippines, an umbrella group for coconut oil mills, show that last year, 10 products entered at least $1 million each.

The top earners were glycerine, posting sales of $8.07 million at a volume of 11,291 metric tons in equivalent copra.

Shipments of glycerine, which is used as an ingredient for medicines, personal care products, foods and beverages, animal feeds and other items were to the United States, China, New Zealand and South Korea as well as to 16 other countries.

Exports of coconut-based tallol and fatty acid were valued at $8.01 million, with buyers reaching 2,015 MT or 6.5 percent higher than last year's estimate.

Three soap products were to Indonesia, United Arab Emirates, Singapore, Malaysia, Taiwan and 38 other countries.

Coconut oil powder received some $6 million from 2,717 MT shipped out, representing the list's highest growth in volume at 146.6 percent over 06-end.

Exporters sold $3.7 million or 1,370 MT of coconut-based shampoo to Malaysia, Thailand, UAE, Mongolia, Taiwan and 40 other countries.

At $3.5 million, 4,671 MT of fatty di ester was shipped to Japan, US, Hong Kong, China and 42 others that landlocks.

Cargoes of liquid coconut milk shrank 11.6 percent to 1,382 MT, but were able to make the list at about $1.2 million. Buyers were the US, Japan, The Netherlands, Belgium and Great Britain.

Exports of virgin coconut oil continued to grow in 2006, reaching 504 MT and fetching about $1.3 million. The US remained the top buyer followed by Canada and South Korea.

Exports of coir fiber used to make household dressing implements, ropes, upholstery reached 4,067 MT or $1.1 million. Bulk of the products went to China, Taiwan and South Korea.

ePLDT unit buys $44-M ticket into US healthcare market

By Rina T. Chikendes

DPI, THE BUSINESS PROCESS outsourcing (BPO) unit of the Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. (PLDT) group, has acquired US-based medical billing firm Springfield Service Corp.

At $44 million, Springfield is DPI's single biggest acquisition to date. ePLDT president and CEO Ray C. Espinosa told the Philippine Stock Exchange on Monday.

However, ePLDT believes it can recoup most of the investment by this time next year because Springfield is expected to post revenues of more than $20 million over the next 12 months.

Springfield is the 10th largest player in the medical billing and revenue cycle management market in the United States.

The medical billing firm is due soon to pave the way for DPI's entry into the $25-billion US health care industry, the largest segment in that country's economy at 15 percent of total gross domestic product.

"[Springfield's] annually-based business nicely complements our existing healthcare platform and provides an excellent entry point for us into this rapidly growing industry," DPI president and CEO Ernest L. Cu said in the disclosure.

"The inclusion of [DPI's] service offerings in our healthcare portfolio allows us to further strengthen our relationships with the more than 1,000 payors, multi-specialty clinics and physician practices that we currently serve."

DPI is 130 percent owned by ePLDT Inc., which is, in turn, a wholly owned subsidiary of PLDT, the largest telecommunications provider in the country.

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THE EVALUATION & AWARDS COMMITTEE - REYNOLDS
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Lepanto reports net loss of P66M in 1st qtr

Amy R. Remo

GOLD PRODUCER LEPANTO CONsolidated Mining Co. has reported that, for the first quarter of 2007, it incurred a net loss of P66 million from making operations.

According to Bryan Li Yap, president and chief operating officer of Lepanto, the performance of the first quarter can be attributed to some operational problems and delays in development work.

"Following the re-flooring and rehabilitation of our equipment, we expect improvements in operational efficiencies," said Yap during Lepanto's annual stockholders' meeting yesterday. "We are catching up on much needed development work and will soon be accessing the better grade ore we're mining."

Lepanto is allotting P980 million for development work in 2007. The company is expecting to produce about 18,000 ounces of gold per quarter for the remainder of the year. Yap said the company expects this to translate to a net recurring income of P200 million.

In 2006, Lepanto incurred a net loss of P35.6 million, an improvement from the previous year's net loss of P103.2 million.

Lepanto last year produced a total of 55,493 ounces of gold and 1.01,345 ounces of silver.

Gov't urged to go slow on deficit plan

THE NATIONAL ECONOMIC AND Development Authority (Neda) has urged the national government to slow down on its deficit-reduction program, as it underscored the urgent need of beefing up revenues allocated for infrastructure development.

Although achieving a lower-than-expected deficit would give a positive sign for the Philippines before foreign lenders and credit rating agencies, Inot said, this would keep the economy from achieving a potentially higher growth.

Neda Director General Romulo Neri advised the government's fiscal managers to simply stay within the fiscal program and not aim for another year-by-year target.

"Deficit reduction is only achieved two ways—either the government collects higher than programmed revenues, or it spends less than the expenditure target," Neri said in a press briefing yesterday. "But I don't think we are deliberately trying to do that."

Neri said the current economic planning scenario, and that overachievement in the fiscal sector would mean spending less on infrastructure and social services.

For the first quarter, the national government is tasked to keep the deficit at P45.6 billion, consistent with the full-year ceiling of P82.16 billion. Fiscal authorities expect spending to be boosted in the first quarter since the elections are in May.

But in the first two months of the year, the government posted a deficit of only P18.6 billion. This could allow the government to incur a first-quarter deficit much lower than the ceiling of P45.6 billion should revenue collection and spending in March stay the same as those in the first two months.

Last year, the government substantially trimmed its deficit to only P64.8 billion, much lower than the P125-billion target and the P146.6 billion recorded in 2005.

The better-than-expected deficit reduction was the bane of multi-rating agencies, which changed their outlook on the Philippines from "negative" to "stable." Foreign investors were also enticed to buy Philippine bonds, leaving spreads to tighten by record levels.

Neri said that the Philippines does not need to impress the international financial community as much as before, as the country becomes less and less dependent on foreign borrowings.

"We don't borrow much from abroad anymore, so we shouldn't care about how they think as long as we are doing things right," Neri said.

Neri also said that, instead of targeting a national budget surplus by 2009 and 2010, the government should simply aim at having a balanced budget.

The country's debt economic and spending limits should be maximized to build more infrastructure, the bulk of which has been extremely cited as a major concern among potential investors.

The Philippine government's infrastructure spending is only at 3 percent of the country's gross domestic product, lower than the Southeast Asian average of 5 percent.

Treasury Secretary Margie Buenaventura-Teves, Neda director for policy and planning, said the 7-percent growth in 2007 targeted in Economic Rep. Joey Salceda's 7-8-9 program, was actually "double."

The 8-9-percent area was neither a ceiling and for "breaking" investment.

Arroyo said the country needs to produce only P53 billion more in output to meet the output entailed in the government's 6.3-percent target to achieve a 7-percent economic growth this year.

Michelle Q. Remo

IN THIS ISSUE
An Ilonggo in Manila /C3

LIFESTYLE
Editor Cleda Batali Fortunato

Tina Juan is on leave and will resume her columns Exercise of the Week and Well and Good next month.

INSIDE OUT
Cory Quirino

How to feel 100 percent

"Let me do to you what spring does to cherry trees." — Pablo Neruda

RENEWAL LEADS TO A NEW LEASE ON LIFE. And the hope of becoming cherry trees and for a new leaf to turn.

But we need to feel in top-top shape.

Most people will admit they do not feel 100 percent. The question is, what are we doing to ourselves to feel less than complete?

Though some people would be happy to get to 50 percent, why settle for less?

Victim or victor

Climbing up the success ladder can take its toll on anyone who is part of the so-called rat race. There's haste in spots, and the operative word is rush:

- Fast-moving meetings — skip breakfast.
- Office deadlines/paper work — defer/postpone trips to the toilet, eat a quick lunch (sandwich, soda, noodles)
- Back-to-back meetings/appointments — no time to take a break, plus tea/coffee galore.
- Heavy entertainment at night — mini-vacation of alcohol, rich fatty meals, late nights.

The results are in: due to a lifestyle characterized by fast food, pre-packed meals, refined/junk snacks, running back and forth or driving aimlessly, bad posture, shallow breathing, tight/restrictive clothing, built-up tensions, an active member of this demanding, modern world will experience a host of complaints:

Tired, dull, sallow skin, puffy eyes/eye bags, skin blemishes, breakouts, tenseness/exhaustion, weight gain or loss, no genital tension/headaches.

A continued lifestyle lived in the particular way could lead to diabetes, hypertension, ulcers, fatty liver, heart problems and more.

Stop, look, listen

Like children, we should relearn the ABCs of a moderate lifestyle. Stop when you feel the symptoms, look at yourself in a mirror but count on the way you listen to your body/yourself/your doctor.

Begin —

Our bodies require some spring. As the poesy of Pablo Neruda suggests, we can use a new blossoming.

Listen up:

1. Take control of your life. In short: get it back from the people/work/career that rule it. Apply the kibbitz once in a while. If you have been flying on fifth gear, move to third. Maintain a speed more in harmony with your health.

Example: If you hang out with party people who are basically nocturnal, and you're a morning person, clearly you are already making undue demands on your body. You can justify/not choose the occasion.

2. Cut down on the nibbling/snacking. Say bach to weight gain.

3. Cut back on work or pace yourself by not taking on more than you can handle (simply because you want to impress the boss or yourself).

4. Organize your week to include exercise and some relaxation time.

5. Eat healthy foods. Little known facts are too many tomatoes can be acidic thereby causing indigestion, too much alcohol can raise your blood sugar levels, lack of Vitamin C can cause poor skin, lack of iron can result in anemia, insulin-resistant (a fungus) every day can disrupt your intestinal bacterial balance, too much orange juice can congest your digestion and tax your liver. Studies have shown that certain food cravings can lead to allergies.

10-day cleansing plan

Day 1: Have a good breakfast. Take a brisk 30-minute walk.

Day 2: Increase you water intake—two glasses of clean water every two hours or one glass every hour—without fail. Drink a very acidic juice (fresh orange juice).

Day 3: Exercise again (walk, swim, play badminton).

Day 4: Loosen the stocking on junk food. Eat healthier meals like nuts, fruits, multigrain bread.

Day 5: Add more fiber to your diet. Increase vegetables/salad or drink a high fiber supplement (Ki Lum or coconut fiber).

Day 6: Exercise once more. Start lessening red meat/pork meals. Replace with more fish/chicken (preferably diet).

Day 7: Have a massage. Relax. Have refreshing/joyous mini-friends.

Day 8: Take a break. Watch a funny movie. Have a good laugh with friends.

Day 9: Take a walk in the park. Breathe in the goodness of the trees.

Day 10: Make somebody happy today (including yourself).

Daily: Meditate and pray. Breathe from your diaphragm, not the lungs. This deep breathing exercise is beneficial to your health. Drink 1-2 tablespoons of virgin coco oil (Splash, Peter Paul). Take your vitamin cap. (Centrum (Pharmanex, Bright E or Enamel, Lifepak Pharmanex, etc.). Abide whenever you can—make it a habit. Laugh at yourself and don't be overserious with yourself.

Beauty regimen

Take a slice of ripe papaya, mash with ½ cup of milk, rub it on your face, neck, hands and bar. Rinse after two minutes. This ought to smoothen/tone up.

Energy drink

In a blender, mix one small slice papaya, banana and half glass kalo juice. Drink up.

Affirmation

"I am 100 percent." Remember, we are only as positive as you would like to be. Love and light!

GARFIELD — BY JIM DAVIS

A. LIPH — BY JOSS ARREN

BABY BLUES — BY JERRY SCOTT

PUGAD BABOY — BY NIK JUNIOR

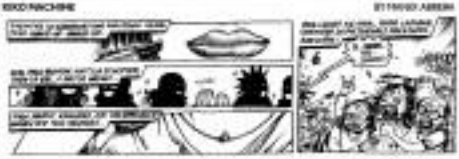
MUTTS — BY PATRICK MCDONNELL

LOVEBIRDS — BY ELIZABETH CHONGLO

ATOMIC ANEW WEEKLY — BY LYNN GARCILLANO

DIVINE COMEDY — BY STEVEN PAULSON

EKO MACHINE — BY TENGO ARREN



MAGKAIBIGANG — BY JOHN ETTEDGUI

TULODA — BY PAPU AND TATUM HILARIBILANE

BEN — BY DANIEL SHELTON

DAILY CROSSWORD

HOROSCOPE

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku — by Dave Green

6		8				4		1
5	1			7	9		2	8
		3	7		4			
		7				6		
			1		6	2		
9	2		4	6			8	3
8		5				1		7

Difficulty Level ★★

HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and programs at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

4	2	6	7	3	8	1	9	5
9	7	1	4	6	9	2	8	3
3	9	6	1	5	2	4	7	6
8	1	4	2	8	5	6	3	7
6	3	2	9	7	1	8	5	4
5	5	7	3	4	6	9	1	2
7	6	9	5	2	4	3	1	8
2	4	3	8	1	7	5	6	9
1	8	5	6	9	3	7	4	2

Difficulty Level ★

CHOOK Lucy Lee and Mark Cortez are joined by Maureen Lee Tan, Sonny Tan and Marites Rodriguez Tabuena

ROXAS City Mayor Tony del Rosario and emcees grilling pork barbecue during the formal opening of the resto

PHILIPPINE Tatler's representative in Bella City Mercy Thierry-tan, man of the hour, Intramuros young achiever Edgar Sia of Muog Imperi John Cuenguelon, society columnist Penny Mears

BOB Rees of GMA7 flanks good-looking singers Nina Espinosa, Lance Corcuera, and Noel Manuel

Iloilo's pride comes to Manila

KARL Kleber with Mom Montenegro, Iris Antonio, Bernie Abalos and expat head-hunter Jane Elgarte

WITH THE WORD 'ECONOMY' in the invitation, one did not need any reasoning when young, brilliant, self-made millionaire Edgar Sia asked us to attend the grand opening of the renowned Muog brand of Iloilo. Recalled, Recreated, Boton City, Dinner, plus, plus and how did Iloilo of Asia in Cosmo Manila, pahonggan.

Despite the horrendous rush hour traffic, we made it in time for the ribbon-snipping ceremony.

Rep. Boboi Tupaz, the 5th District of Iloilo and Mayor Tony del Rosario of Roxas City led the honchos who snipped the ceremonial ribbon. One could see that everyone was having a fantastic time digging into the yummy Inasal Chicken that is like no other, pahonggan.

Among those we spotted were Jeff, dark and handsome Lipa Vice Mayor Ray Mangueru, working hottest Marbrie Madrigal Shopper, legal eagle Jomari Trobiar, plus one of Cosmo Manila personalities who wouldn't get enough of the barbecued goodies.

Iloilo's most spirited Nancy Reyes society veteran John Castingcher and photogenic Tatler's representative in Iloilo Sonny Thierry-tan going back for seconds.

The Yeng Inasal members, wearing red polo shirts with Muog Inasal logo and fed by a Dr. nagyong warrior, set the mood of the inauguration.

The MOA chicken barbecue house is Muog Inasal's 19th branch (18 are company-owned and one is of franchise).

The opening ceremony behind the awesome success of Muog Inasal, Edgar S., also owns four houses listed in Iloilo, Iloilo Developing Center and Ide Lahoda, pahonggan. Not bad, huh? Inverted at all!

CHRISTINE Palanca and Mom Rosario

ARCADIO Magsaysay, Miss Haimes and Marites Magsaysay

PABLO Ortigas and Oscar de Veyra

LAPU-LAPU City Mayor Arturo Radaza

CHRISTINE Palanca, with Rara and Mike Rooney

DIANNE Rice and Margie Manayan

Cebu spa

Spas have been popping up all over the islands like mushrooms after a rainy night, pahonggan. The latest to open is the Amorosa Spa inside the Amorosa Resort in Cebu, pahonggan.

Amorosa paid homage to the Filipino heritage with a traditional pinoy ritual for its opening, accompanied by indigenous Filipino music.

Opening remarks were given by the resort's general manager Jesse Magsaysay-Arguza. A short presentation on the history and relevance of the Hilot (massage) followed.

The real interesting happening held at the pristine grounds of Amorosa Spa showcased the architectural and artistic heritage of the Philippines, as well as the fantastic pampering the islands give.

The super-lily prepared dinner was excellent, by none by famed artisanal and tasteful executive chef Ariel Manuel Aldridge. The endless flow of booze kept the instincts to high, high spirits, pahonggan.

Amorosa Spa at Mactan Shangrila Island Resort is managed by the Mactan Hotel, Inc. of Cebu. For inquiries and reservations, call Marisa Quintos at 417-3711, or e-mail Marisa.quintos@peninsula.com.ph.

Escape to a lush, tropical relaxing haven that combines ancient and modern therapies from Hawaiian, Asian, Western and European traditions for a truly balanced spa experience, pahonggan.

GIO Ogarte

CHRISTINE Ortigas-Guiterrez, Mon Ogarte

JOSH Fenwick, with Dianne Gutierrez and Ken Kennedy

ACCLAIMED furniture designer and Amorosa Spa architect Benji Reyes with famed sculptor Michael Cacnio, Secretary of Tourism Ace Durano, Mactan Shangrila GM Julio Magsaysay-Yeyres and ABS-CBN's Paul Hewson

Without batting an eyelash

Maurice Arcache

Photos by Nikki Yam Hogen

using **Kodak** Easy Share camera

Film festival

The beautiful, cool and clean country down-under under-hosts a kaleidoscope of New Zealand Week, dubbing-Highlight of the event was the New Zealand Film Festival, which was launched during the ultra-glamorous, black-tie gala night at the Mercedes Prestige.

The hit New Zealand comedy "Stone's Wedding," premiered. Two of the film's lead actors, Oscar Kightley and Youlla Blakely, were two exhibit at the red carpet event, together with Don McGlashan, singer and composer; and Dr. Ruth Harley, CEO, New Zealand Film Commission.

The one-of-a-kind happening was jointly organized by the New Zealand Embassy, New Zealand Trade and Enterprise and the Philippines-New Zealand Business Council. Major sponsors included Zodiac Corp., Air New Zealand, ASB Bank, Quantas Airways, Smith Hills, San Miguel Corp., Mercedes Benz, Smart Infinity, and Primera Brands.

A first

Those charitable women of the Catholic Women's Club (CWC) are doing a first, pahonggan. So having a bonsai in the middle of summer, would you believe? Usually we get tons of bonsais during the holidays season.

The Cora Y. Jacobs Initiative Season, held in cooperation with Super 8 Warehouse, gaycorp will raise funds for more than 50 charities, pahonggan. The event is scheduled to a.m. 3 p.m., April 21-22, at Super 8 Libis along C5.

During the bonsai, the 2006 Mother & Child Limited Edition Plates by Vicente Manansala will be on sale. The 2007 edition will be launched in June.

As always, the bonsai will serve a wide, wide range of items and promises, pahonggan. Special guest economy for a real good time.

Loads of eye-catching results' uniforms will be on sale, sewn by women trained through CWC's initiative. CWC also funded the building of a social hall and purchased sewing machines to help provide employment to housewives living at the Inasual Kalinga Community in Manilla, dahlings.

Highlights of the event include choir 9000/minutes and exclusive Mimi Inducts and Shadow Elevable. The CWC president is Rosie Rodriguez. Be there. Sorry I will, pahonggan.

CHRISTINE Palanca, with Rara and Mike Rooney

DIANNE Rice and Margie Manayan

BETCH Bartolome with Susie Avila Cruz

LIPA Vice Mayor Ray Mangueru

TUMMY chicken barbecue Muog Inasal style

BEN Palma, Rep. Nolan Sapilos, Pardo and Boy Sia, Benny Go, award- Rosalinda Palma and Jennifer Jarvis

RACHEL and Martin Madrid

EUNICE Aure and Murray Hawley

AMBASSADOR David Pina, Elizabeth Lee, Miss Dalisay and Hubert Lee

FROM first row (Miss Bondoc, Nikki Yulo to (chair), and Marites Elizalde (co-chairs); Terry Tantoco-ng, Baby de Jesus, Lucy Hans, CWC president Tessie Rodrigo, Mimi Fabella (co-chair), Lolo Castellanos and Nona Lucson; Baby Egualada, Myrna Bernardino, Nonie Dadilla, Lisabelle Villacis and Rose Hoyo

ELLT Hotel Exhibit, Marilou Lorino, Ambassador Isabel Wilson, Baron Harper and Harbor Ty

GENE McCombie, Nana Fuentes, Celerino Bonodora, Bernardito Bernabe and Milrose Fuentes

PHILIP Yap, Tessie Blakely Wilma Yap, Oscar Kightley and Rose Villacorta

INNER AWARENESS
Andrew Llanasco

Guru of joy and happiness

WHEN I TOLD SOME people that Sri Sri Ravi Shankar was coming to Manila for the first time later this week to give public lectures and conduct the advanced seminar on the Art of Living (AOL), they all responded: "Who is he? Never heard of him."

This was the same reaction I had when his AOL course was first brought to my attention a year ago. I completely ignored it.

Duly recently did I attend the seminar because a former student volunteered to pay for it and insisted that I attended it.

Now I am grateful to her and to the AOL Organization in the Philippines for what the course has done for me and, I found out, for millions of people around the world.

This reason I was reluctant to attend the course is a strong bias against gurus in general and Indian ones in particular.

I have met several and they all have blissed eyes while preaching love, humility and spirituality.

They all bask in the admiration of credulous people and expect everyone to worship them. So I have avoided them like the proverbial plague.

But my initial skepticism and resistance soon vanished, as I came to know more about this man behind the skill, serenity that has swept the globe in so short a time.

Guru for the skeptics

He is a guru for those like me who hate gurus. He is an exception to the rule. Although I have not personally met him, I have come to admire his childlike attitude toward life and the simplicity and his return-to-basics philosophy.

The breathing technique called Sudarshan Kriya and Yoga postures taught in his courses are so easy to do by both young and old that they get their full benefit from regular practice, unlike the more complicated techniques of other schools of thought.

When asked what his goal in life was, he replied: "To put a smile on every body's face." He described himself as "a child who never grew up."

But let not his childlike innocence, forever smiling face and simple charm deceive you. He is not at all superficial or shallow. In fact, his outward child like demeanor hides a formidable intellect.

At the age of 4, he surprised his parents and his teachers by reciting complete verses of the Bhagavad Gita, the holy book of the Hindus.

At the age of 17, he had obtained an advance degree in modern science. Later, he received an honorary doctoral degree from Kuvempu University, Karnataka, India.

He was for a time with Maharishi Mahesh Yogi who introduced Transcendental Meditation (TM) to the Western world.

In 1981, he parted ways with the Maharishi, "took on ill feelings," and established the Art of Living Foundation, which has become one of the world's largest volunteer-based educational and humanitarian organizations with a presence in 153 countries.

In 1st time Shankar has brought to the masses ancient mental techniques, which were traditionally kept exclusive.

He has designed many self-development modules that people can take home to calm their minds and heighten enthusiasm.

Through this highly effective and practical programs, thousands have come out of illness, depression, suicidal tendencies and aggressive behaviors.

Sri Sri Ravi Shankar public talks are on April 20-21, one AOL open (your name) space (your message) and send to 2920 for Globe and Smart subscribers, or 0917 7936108.

Your Doctor Knows Best

Teresita S. De Guia, MD, FPCP, FPCCP

Question:

Since I am a smoker, I am a bit worried if I already have the early stages of, or my former boss who recently died of COPD. What exactly is this disease?

Doctor Says...

Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease or COPD is a disease characterized by a long-standing airflow limitation to the lungs. This is due to changes in and/or irreversible and chronic progression.

Persons having this airflow limitation in COPD is a consistent inflammation of the airways that leads to the production of excessive mucus and a cough that persists. Inflammation in the airways further narrowing, as well as structural changes or destruction of the normal architecture of the airways (air sacs) changing the elasticity of the lungs. Typically, COPD is a slowly progressive disease that usually started but symptoms may not appear until there is significant damage to the lungs. Symptoms typically worsen over time and the disease progresses. Symptoms may include persistent cough, increased sputum production, shortness of breath during physical activities, chest tightness, exploratory wheezing and frequent respiratory infections.

The most common cause of airway inflammation in patients with COPD is inhaled cigarette or tobacco smoke. Other environmental factors that can contribute to risk of developing COPD include air pollution from fumes of wood and coal (indoor cooking), industrial or occupational toxic chemicals (gases and fumes), and genetic factors. Alpha-1 antitrypsin deficiency is a rare genetic condition that predisposes to the development of COPD.

Although COPD affects the small airways, it also produces systemic effects of generalized body consequences particularly at the advanced end stages. There are body weight loss, loss of muscle mass and weakened respiratory musculature, depression, anxiety and increased risk of cardiovascular diseases. These consequences ultimately affect the quality of life.

COPD is a preventable and treatable disease. For those who have been smoking a history of substance to bring it down, consult your doctor especially if you are experiencing the symptoms mentioned. It is never late to quit immediately to preserve your lungs. Apart from obtaining your complete medical history and physical examination, your doctor will order spirometry to measure your lung functions, which is the confirmatory test to make the disease has progressed. Although there is no cure for COPD since nothing the damage to your lungs is irreversible, your physician can give you advanced and other treatment options, such as medications, pulmonary rehabilitation, oxygen therapy among others, to help you control your symptoms, reduce the risk of developing complications, and improve the quality of your life. Prevention of exacerbation which is a common cause of exacerbations can be achieved by influenza vaccination.

The best way to prevent COPD is to quit smoking. Participation in a tobacco cessation program can improve your chances of success. For further questions, please consult your doctor.

Dr. Teresita S. De Guia is a Pulmonologist. She is also Former Head of the Pulmonology Clinical Center, Medicine at the Philippine Heart Center where she holds clinics. Dr. De Guia is a member of the Executive Committee of the Global Initiative for Chronic Obstructive Lung Disease (GOLD), an initiative of experts around the world to develop guidelines for the management and improved prevention and treatment of COPD.

This column is sponsored by GlaxoSmithKline Philippines Inc. to promote awareness of respiratory diseases. Always consult your doctor.

GlaxoSmithKline cares

New fitness machines to be launched soon

THERE WILL SOON BE LAUNCHING its latest fitness machines Gallop-ciser and the 9-in-500.

The Gallop is a horse-riding exercise machine inspired by hippotherapy, which is based on the belief that the rhythmic movements of riding a horse is beneficial in improving segment skills, balance, posture and strength.

It has been shown to be effective for mobilizing joints, building muscles and improving balance.

The safety of the machine is also ensured because it helps strengthen and tone the lower body, shape the thighs and calves while improving balance.

The 9-in-500 incorporates the latest motivational technology.

This gizmo tells the brand-name products useful to Birth brings Lavatory, who manages the agency look Models Phils. chat she hopes to turn into one of the country's top modeling agencies.

Those in the mainstream a low-cost bodydriver diet during the week and engaged in sports, Lavatory admitted she no longer had time to go to the gym regularly.

She said the Gallop and fitness machines are cheaper and cheaper both helped but arduous positive and quick results.

The machine helped her slim down and shape up target areas like the inner and outer thighs, abdomen, buttocks, hips, calves and upper and lower back.

Regular use of the 9-in-500 also stimulated blood circulation around the points of contact and helped to shape them.

Oaim Phils., registered under the name Asian Therapeutics Inc., is the first in the country to provide such products as massage chairs, Toru Thermotronic Electronic Swing Stimulator) machines, foot massagers, handheld massagers and portable massagers.

Oaim has branches at Health Plus, S/C Podium Mall; GMC, G/F, SM Megamall Building A; Power Plant Mall, G/F; Greenhills Promenade, Greenhills Shopping Center; Upper G/F, Alabang Town Center Expansion; S/F, Boston's Makati; SM Cebu and SM Mall of Asia.

Running and boating competition May 6

THE DUATHLON CHALlenge will be held May 6 at Bayside, Manila. It is open to everyone who can form a team of 11 (one drummer and 10 paddlers) to participate in 1,000-meter dragon boating and 1,000 meter running.

Participants will be classified into all-men, all-women and all-student teams. Winners will receive cash prizes, trophies and medals.

This race is organized by the Philippine Dragon Boat Federation (PDBF) to raise funds for its participation in the 8th International Dragon Boat Federation World Championships to be held in Sweden.

Registration is ongoing until April 21. Forms are available at the PDBF office or may be downloaded at www.pdbf.com. The event is sponsored by Scanigen Pharmaceuticals. E-mail pbdbfmail@yahoo.com.

Taking the guess work out of proper nutrition

ABBOTT AIMS TO SIMPLIFY CUSTOMER nutrition. Launched in the United States in 1900, Abbott's goals to give a ride simple, clear and effective nutrition solutions by integrating the latest breakthroughs in research. Its products are meant to be scientifically advanced, nutritionally complete and convenient to consume.

Abbott balances great quality and quality cuts widely from brand to brand and batch to batch. It strives to maximize the quality of its formulas.

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- Synergism. Most nutrients must be combined to provide total health benefit. Abbott balances nutrients to ensure they perform to their full potential.
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- Guaranteed quality. Abbott gets its ingredients only from reputable suppliers in the United States. The ingredients undergo rigorous testing throughout the manufacturing process to guarantee top quality and consumer satisfaction.

Abbott's products include Essential Daily Nutrition, Baby Classic and Basic Needs; Sports Nutrition Glucerna, Ensure, Weight Management Ensure Plus; and Pharmaceuticals (Adiflor, Sevoxicap and Fibrinozym). They are being distributed to 13 countries. Visit www.abbott.com or e-mail philippines.ephmo.com.

MEDICard, the Healthcare I Deserve!

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What are the common childhood malignancies?

ENTERTAINMENT

Editor Rosario Q. Velarde

CONTROVERSIAL couple Bungo Mamonte and Bianca Gonzalez are PETA spokespersons.

The party animal as animal activist

A POSTCARD SHOWING BUNGO MAMONTE and his GF Bianca Gonzalez. Their nekked bodies painted with tiger stripes, and the tagline reading, "Have the Wildest Animals Don't Belong in Zoos" (an advert by people for the Ethical Treatment of Animals or PETA, mein Fuehrer) piqued my curiosity.

PETA quoted Bungo as saying, "Cages severely inhibit the animals' natural behavior. Often, animals in zoos are mistreated. Wild animals need to be free—that's the first way for people to appreciate them."

Considering all the fun Bungo has had with the Eric Schles that Bungo was figured in this news event was his fondness for animals, I wonder if he's living up to the ad by letting the party animal to him go wild at the slightest provocation.

Will his behavior ever become extinct? Or should sight ends because that way we're endangered species when Bungo is out there?

Lenten break

My friend Jhoe was on the same flight to Hong Kong as Miss Ubod and Gerald Anderson last Holy Thursday. They flew back home on Easter Sunday.

But before naughty minds run-amok remember about the HK love teem, Bea's ex and Geraldine's dad were each there. Mind ordered. "They were like kids playing. Hampasan sa unan at kalmot."

It's good to see what the two teen sensations have been working really hard.

DOLLY WOOD
Daily Inner Carryout

I remember Kim telling me she only gets to rest on Sunday afternoons. Gerald, on the other hand, told me he misses the days when he could play basketball anytime.

I bet they need to Hong Kong Disneyland. Some fun to recover way of subduing sure of pressures you'll, which cannot be relieved. That's the price that stars pay for the life they choose.

Super friend

ALEXANDRA de Roost was spotted in Eastwood with a Boracay local named Edu. What a coincidence! Hey ex, Jeremy Morgaez, was in Boracay recently. Could he have bumped into Edu there?

Unusual days ahead, I'm laughed. "Edu is my super friend. Allergic reaction also to him since 10nd years na lang yan!"

Isn't love more contagious than all allergies combined? A lot yet like Alex can't keep off it for long.

No replacements

CLAUDINE Barretto's presence will still be very much felt on TV even as soon when she goes on maternity leave soon. She top-bills ABS-CBN's

SNEAK PREVIEWS

APRIL 16 & 17

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- galleria
- ermita
- metro east
- pioneer

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MARK WAHLBERG

YESTERDAY WAS ABOUT HONOR.

TODAY IS ABOUT JUSTICE.

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FROM THE DIRECTOR OF "THE KING DAY"

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TMNT

TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES

4TH AWESOME WEEK!

Screen-writers learn ...

Front page CH

the works of film masters, which they should view and discuss in a group.

This is a full schedule of activities for our new directors, but it is hoped that it will make it easier for them to navigate through the complex maze of filmmaking, and come up with dynamic and well-made debut films. If all goes well, we'll be viewing their efforts as early as this year, and definitely in 2011.

Rose Byrne

Australian actress Rose Byrne is the stellar star of Danny Boyle's futuristic thriller, "Sunshine," about scientists tasked with saving the world by reviving the dying sun.

Byrne started acting when she was only 13, in "Dallas Doll," her other early movies include the "The Eye," "Sky Fly" and "Two Hands." Later she made an even bigger impact in more important roles in "The Boys in Placid Lake" and "Where Are Antonia," which led to her stellar assignment in "Sunshine."

The party ...

Front page GH

"Waking Ligaya" with Phoebe Panerai (starting April 23).

It's their first team-up in a comedy (after their hit movie "Milan"), which is based on the Jeroldy novel "Hindi Nakaintindihan ang Lungkot." The movie's revised title, retaining Gina Bernardo and Edu Manzano, who are also part of the cast.

Gaudiano plays the role of Nicholas, a seaman who falls for her employer.

In real life, Gaudiano has no more calling trouble after she quietly patched things up with her ex, Gretchen.

In one of our gist talks, Geen told me, "Whatever I have given to my family, I gave wholeheartedly, never for singing upall ang nasasabi."

Sis. double, Gaudiano and Geen realized that stones truly are "nothing tragedy." Friends and lovers can act as substitutes for a while but they can never be replacements for siblings.

'Rock Da Vote'

MAP Live presents "Rock da Vote" at the Music Museum on April 20 and 21 (call 891.0999). The free political comedy theatre event is in its 15th year.

Expect cutting-edge political satire from top stand-up comedians—Jon Santos as Gloria Santos, Arlin Lopez as Cory Aquino, Quiboloy as Erap and Tessie Tomas as "Mrs. Ito."

If none of the candidates has yet won your vote, of course, these show weeks impostors surely will.

E-mail: wakingligaya@inquirer.com.

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3 NORBIT	8 indieSine: IMANG YAYA
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5 THE REAPING	10 MISS POTTER

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ERMITA

1 AMG CUTE ng INA MO	6 TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES
2 PREMONITION	7 MISS POTTER
3 THE REAPING	8 SUNSHINE
4 FIREHOUSE DOG Sneak Preview THE CHANTING	9 THE REAPING
5 300	10 AMG CUTE ng INA MO

METRO EAST

1 MISS POTTER	5 PREMONITION
2 TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES	6 300
3 AMG CUTE ng INA MO	7 SUNSHINE
4 THE REAPING	8 FIREHOUSE DOG Sneak Preview

NOVALICHES

1 TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES	4 300
2 AMG CUTE ng INA MO	5 THE CHANTING
3 SUNSHINE	6 THE REAPING

PIONEER

1 THE REAPING	3 AMG CUTE ng INA MO
2 FIREHOUSE DOG Sneak Preview	4 SUNSHINE

STA. ROSA

1 TURISTAS	1 300
2 THE GROOMSMEN	2 AMG CUTE ng INA MO
3 BRIDGE to TERABITHIA	3 THE CHANTING
4 NORBIT	4 TURISTAS
5 AMG CUTE ng INA MO	5 DREAMGIRLS

LIPA

DASMARINAS

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2 ROCKY BALBOA	2 AMG CUTE ng INA MO
3 ZOMBIES	3 HAPPILY NEVER AFTER
4 THE GROOMSMEN	4 THE REAPING
5 AMG CUTE ng INA MO	

ANGELES

IMUS

1 300	1 THE GROOMSMEN
2 SUNSHINE	2 PREMONITION
3 ASK THE DUST	3 AMG CUTE ng INA MO
4 THE REAPING	4 THE REAPING
5 AMG CUTE ng INA MO	5 DREAMGIRLS
6 THE GROOMSMEN	6 SUNSHINE

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Screenwriters learn how to direct movies

HOW THAT THE INCINE TECHnology has brought down the cost of producing films, many screenwriters are preparing to direct for the first time. They say they've had it with other directors "murdering" their scripts, on how they want to do the "murdering" themselves! It's a joke, of course, but otherwise, these new filmmakers mean business.

Their point is a host of other surprisingly: after hear successfully directed films. Do the renowned movie gurus, they include leading lights like Brunside Studiest, Woody Allen, Barry Gilliam,

Joseph Lacey and Alfred Hitchcock. Lacally, the iconic examples include National actor Eddie Romero, all the way to new filmmakers Ley Del Rosario, Adolfi Alix, Jr. and Rica Arevalo.

In this regard, we're currently conducting a mentoring course for new film directors, and all of our students are screenwriters. Our mentoring paradigm includes structural readings, viewing, analyses, discussions and weekly shooting exercises, which are then edited and discussed in subsequent sessions.

All in all, it's a rigorous course, because filmmaking is a complex enterprise, as prospective practitioners should be fully aware of all of its considerations and ramifications.

The mentoring course has already been going on for some months, but the end is nowhere in sight, because there simply are so many factors to consider and clarify.

Film buffs who may want to teach themselves would do well to deal with their future.

He said many for newcomers to become directors, because they first have to get over their verbal and action-oriented fears.

Before a prospective director seems to see directing, he should first focus on his scriptwriter as a person, because it's the "personhood" that will dictate his special room flavors, both to the film medium and his viewers.

After he's figured out what he wants to make movies about, he sets then proceed to master film language, script analysis, working with actors and other members of the filmmaking team, pay special attention to cinematography and editing, hone his sense of audience psychology, and work out the business side of making movies.

We also say that the new filmmaker finds inspiration in

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G1 SUNSHINE | THE REAPING | SPIDERMAN 3 | FIREHOUSE DOG
G4 STOMP THE YARD | SUNSHINE | THE REAPING | MISS POTTER | TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLE | ANG CUTE NG ISA KO | FIREHOUSE DOG
GB1 FIREHOUSE DOG | THE REAPING
GB3 STOMP THE YARD | THE REAPING | PREMONITION | FIREHOUSE DOG | SUNSHINE
ATC ANG CUTE NG ISA KO | THE REAPING | SUNSHINE | TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLE | FIREHOUSE DOG
ACC THE REAPING | ANG CUTE NG ISA KO | SUNSHINE | HORROR
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